United Nations E/CN.6/2013/1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 December 2012

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-seventh session**
4-15 March 2013
Item 2 of the provisional agenda
**Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters**

# Annotated provisional agenda and proposed organization of work*

## Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":
   (a) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives:
      (i) Priority theme: elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls;
      (ii) Review theme: the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS;
   (b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men: key gender equality issues to be reflected in the post-2015 development framework;
   (c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters.
4. Communications concerning the status of women.
5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.
6. Provisional agenda for the fifty-eighth session of the Commission.
7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fifty-seventh session.

* The proposed organization of work will be issued as E/CN.6/2013/1/Add.1.

12-65363 (E) 020113

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## Annotations

### 1. Election of officers

In accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and pursuant to Council resolution 1987/21 and decision 2002/234, the Commission on the Status of Women, at the 1st meeting of its fifty-sixth session, on 14 March 2011, elected, by acclamation, Marjon V. Kamara (Liberia) as Chair, and Irina Velichko (Belarus) and Carlos Enrique García González (El Salvador) as Vice-Chairs of the fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh sessions of the Commission. At the 2nd meeting of its fifty-sixth session, on 27 February 2012, the Commission elected Ana Marie L. Hernando (Philippines) and Filippo Cinti (Italy) as Vice-Chairs, and designated Mr. Cinti to act as Rapporteur of the Commission.

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/16, the Commission appoints five members to serve two-year terms on the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women established in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/27. At the 1st meeting of its fifty-sixth session, the Commission appointed Li Xiaomei (China) for the Asia-Pacific States and Noa Furman (Israel) for the Western European and other States. At its 2nd meeting, on 27 February 2012, the Commission appointed Ms. Fatima Alfeine (Comoros), Mr. Ruben Armando Escalante Hasbún (El Salvador), and Mr. Grigory Lukiyantsev (Russian Federation) to serve as members of the Working Group.

### 2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 7 of the rules of procedure provides that the Commission, at the beginning of each session, shall adopt the agenda of that session on the basis of the provisional agenda.

The provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission were approved by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 2012/249.

Preparations for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission were undertaken in accordance with its agreed conclusions 1996/1 on methods of work and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2006/9 and 2009/15. Accordingly, the Bureau of the Commission held several meetings as well as informal briefings and consultations with delegations to consider the organization and methods of work for the session.

Following past practice, statements delivered by representatives of delegations of members and observers of the Commission during general discussions shall be limited to 5 minutes, and statements made on behalf of groups of delegations to 10 minutes. It is also recommended that interventions from non-governmental organizations be integrated into the general debate and the thematic panel discussions, taking into consideration geographical balance.

**3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"**

**(a) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

*High-level round table*

In its resolution 2006/9, the Economic and Social Council decided that the annual interactive high-level round table would focus on experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme.

The high-level round table at the fifty-seventh session will focus on "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls".

**Documentation**

Discussion guide for the high-level round table on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls: note by the Secretariat (E/CN.6/2013/5)

*Priority theme*

In its resolution 2009/15, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the Commission's proposed future organization and methods of work. Accordingly, at its fifty-seventh session, the Commission will consider the theme "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls".

*Review theme*

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15, the Commission will evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from its fifty-third session on "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS".

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General on multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence (E/CN.6/2013/3)

Report of the Secretary-General on prevention of violence against women and girls (E/CN.6/2013/4)

*Future programme of work*

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15, the Commission will discuss the possibility of conducting in 2015 a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and will decide on priority themes for future sessions.

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General on proposals for priority themes for future sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2013/7)

**(b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men: key gender equality issues to be reflected in the post-2015 development framework**

In its resolution 2006/9, the Economic and Social Council requested the Bureau of the Commission, prior to each session, to identify, in consultation with all States, through their regional groups, an emerging issue for consideration by the Commission, taking into account developments at the global and regional levels as well as planned activities within the United Nations, where increased attention to gender perspectives was required.

Following consultation, the Bureau decided that the Commission would hold an interactive expert panel on the emerging issue of key gender equality issues to be reflected in the post-2015 development framework.

**(c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters**

*Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*

In accordance with paragraph 67 (c) of General Assembly resolution 64/289, the Commission will have before it the annual report of the head of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on the normative aspects of the work of UN-Women and on its implementation of the policy guidance provided by the Commission.

*Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women*

In its resolution 2012/25 on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, the Economic and Social Council requested the Commission to continue to monitor and take action with regard to the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. It also requested the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation, to assist Palestinian women by all available means and to submit to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session a report, including information provided by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

*Violence against women*

In its resolution 50/166 on the role of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in eliminating violence against women, the General Assembly requested the Fund to include in its regular reports information on the establishment of a trust fund in support of national, regional and international actions to eliminate violence against women and to provide such information to the Commission.

*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*

In accordance with article 21.2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women are transmitted to the Commission for its information. The report of the Committee on its forty-ninth, fiftieth and fifty-first sessions (A/67/38) will be before the Commission. A note by the Secretariat transmitting the results of the fifty-second and fifty-third sessions of the Committee will also be before the Commission.

**Documentation**

Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2013/2)

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2013/6)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women (A/HRC/23/17-E/CN.6/2013/8)

**Documents for information**

Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its forty-ninth, fiftieth and fifty-first sessions (A/67/38)

Note by the Secretariat transmitting the results of the fifty-second and fifty-third sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/2013/CRP.1)

**4. Communications concerning the status of women**

In its resolution 76 (V), the Economic and Social Council established a procedure by which the Commission would receive and consider communications relating to the status of women. In its resolution 304 I (XI), the Council amended resolution 76 (V) and requested the Secretary-General to compile, before each session of the Commission, a list of confidential and non-confidential communications, containing a brief indication of the substance of each communication.

In its resolution 1983/27, the Council reaffirmed the mandate of the Commission to consider confidential and non-confidential communications on the status of women and authorized the Commission to appoint a working group to consider such communications and prepare a report thereon for the Commission.

In its resolution 1993/11, the Council reaffirmed that the Commission was empowered to make recommendations to the Council on what action should be taken on emerging trends and patterns of discrimination against women revealed by such communications.

In its decision 2002/235, the Council decided, in order to make the communications procedure of the Commission more effective and efficient:

(a) That the Commission, starting at its forty-seventh session, should appoint, at each session, the members of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women for the next session so that the members would be able to meet to enable the Secretariat to issue their report three working days before the adoption of the agenda by the Commission;

(b) To request the Secretary-General:

(i) To inform Governments about each communication pertaining to them that would be considered by the Commission and give them at least 12 weeks before the consideration of such communications by the Working Group;

(ii) To ensure that the members of the Working Group receive in advance the lists of communications, including replies from Governments, if any, to be taken into account in preparing its report for examination by the Commission.

In its resolution 2009/16, the Economic and Social Council decided that the Commission, starting at its fifty-fourth session, should appoint the members of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women for a two-year period.

**Documentation**

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the list of confidential communications concerning the status of women (E/CN.6/2013/SW/COMM.LIST/47/R and Add.1)

## 5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

The Commission will have before it a letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council on follow-up to the Council's policy recommendations.

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/27, functional commissions are invited to provide concise, action-oriented input to the Council's annual high-level segment. At its 2013 annual ministerial review, the Council will consider the theme "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals". The Commission will have before it a note by the Secretariat concerning the Commission's input to the 2013 annual ministerial review.

**Documentation**

Letter dated 29 November 2012 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2013/9)

Note by the Secretariat on science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (E/CN.6/2013/10)

## 6. Provisional agenda for the fifty-eighth session of the Commission

In accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council, the Commission will have before it a draft provisional agenda for its fifty-eighth session, including the list of documents to be submitted for its consideration.

**7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fifty-seventh session**

In accordance with rule 37 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council, the Commission shall submit to the Council a report on the work of its fifty-seventh session.

# Annex

## Membership of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-seventh session (2013)

### (45 members; four-year term)

| *Membership* | *Term expires at close of session in the year* |
|---|---|
| Argentina | 2014 |
| Bangladesh | 2014 |
| Belarus | 2013 |
| Belgium | 2015 |
| Brazil | 2016 |
| Central African Republic | 2014 |
| China | 2016 |
| Colombia | 2013 |
| Comoros | 2014 |
| Cuba | 2016 |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 2015 |
| Dominican Republic | 2016 |
| El Salvador | 2014 |
| Estonia | 2015 |
| Finland | 2016 |
| Gambia | 2014 |
| Georgia | 2015 |
| Germany | 2013 |
| Guinea | 2013 |
| Indonesia | 2016 |
| Iran (Islamic Republic of) | 2015 |
| Iraq | 2013 |
| Israel | 2013 |
| Italy | 2013 |
| Jamaica | 2015 |

| *Membership* | *Term expires at close of session in the year* |
|---|---|
| Japan | 2013 |
| Liberia | 2015 |
| Libya | 2014 |
| Malawi | 2016 |
| Malaysia | 2014 |
| Mauritania | 2013 |
| Mongolia | 2014 |
| Netherlands | 2015 |
| Nicaragua | 2013 |
| Niger | 2016 |
| Philippines | 2014 |
| Republic of Korea | 2014 |
| Russian Federation | 2016 |
| Rwanda | 2013 |
| Spain | 2015 |
| Swaziland | 2014 |
| Thailand | 2015 |
| United States of America | 2016 |
| Uruguay | 2014 |
| Zimbabwe | 2015 |

United Nations E/CN.6/2013/1/Add.1

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 December 2012

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-seventh session**
4-15 March 2013
Item 2 of the provisional agenda*
**Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters**

## Proposed organization of work

| *Date/time* | *Agenda item* | | *Programme* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Monday, 4 March | | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 1 | Election of officers | |
| | Item 2 | Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters | |
| | Item 3 | Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" | Opening statements<br>Introduction of reports<br>General discussion |
| 1 p.m. | | | Deadline for inscription on the list of speakers for the general discussion |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (a) (i) | Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: priority theme: elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls | High-level round table on experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made in regard to the priority theme (in two parallel meetings) |

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| *Date/time* | *Agenda item* | *Programme* |
|---|---|---|
| Tuesday, 5 March | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 3 (*continued*) | General discussion |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | Interactive expert panel on key policy initiatives and capacity-building for gender mainstreaming: elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls<br><br>Focus: prevention of violence against women and girls |
| | Item 3 (c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters | |
| Wednesday, 6 March | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 3 (*continued*) | General discussion |
| 1.15-2.30 p.m. | | Preparatory panel for 2014: challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (a) (i) and (c) (*continued*) | Interactive expert panel on key policy initiatives and capacity-building for gender mainstreaming: elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls<br><br>Focus: multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence |
| Thursday, 7 March | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 3 (*continued*) | General discussion |
| 10 a.m. (*in parallel*) | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men | Interactive expert panel discussion on the emerging issue: key gender equality issues to be reflected in the post-2015 development framework |
| Friday, 8 March | | |
| 10 a.m. to noon | | Celebration of International Women's Day |

| *Date/time* | *Agenda item* | *Programme* |
|---|---|---|
| Noon | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |
| Monday, 11 March | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 3 (*continued*) | General discussion |
| 10 a.m. (*in parallel*) | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (*continued*) | General discussion (concludes) |
| 3 p.m. (*in parallel*) | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |
| Tuesday, 12 March | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 3 (a) (ii) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: review theme: the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS | Interactive dialogue to evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS<br>Focus: gender norms and stereotypes, socialization and unequal power relations, and sharing and balancing life-work responsibilities |
| 3 p.m. | | Deadline for submission of draft proposals |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (a) (ii) (*continued*) | Interactive dialogue to evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS<br>Focus: caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS, and recognizing and valuing unpaid care work |
| Wednesday, 13 March | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |

| *Date/time* | *Agenda item* | | *Programme* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 p.m. | Item 4 | Communications concerning the status of women | Closed meeting to consider the report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women |
| | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |
| Thursday, 14 March | | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 5 | Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions | Introduction and discussion<br>Introduction of draft proposals |
| | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (a) (i) (*continued*) | | Agreed conclusions (informal consultations) |
| Friday, 15 March | | | |
| 10 a.m. | Item 3 (*continued*) | | Action on draft proposals |
| 3 p.m. | Item 3 (*continued*) | | Action on draft proposals |
| | Item 6 | Provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission | Adoption of the provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission |
| | Item 7 | Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fifty-seventh session | Adoption of the report<br>Closure of the fifty-seventh session[a] |

[a] In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2002/234, immediately following the closure of the fifty-seventh session, the Commission will hold the first meeting of its fifty-eighth session for the sole purpose of electing the Chair and other members of the Bureau, in accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council.

United Nations E/CN.6/2013/2

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
21 December 2012

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-seventh session**
4-15 March 2013
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"**

## Normative aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

### Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

*Summary*

The General Assembly, in paragraph 67 (c) of its resolution 64/289, by which it established the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), requested the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women "an annual report on the normative aspects of the Entity's work and on its implementation of the policy guidance provided by the Commission". The present report is submitted in accordance with that request and summarizes the normative aspects of the work of UN-Women and elaborates on the Entity's contribution to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in gender-specific as well as in sectoral intergovernmental processes. It provides information on how UN-Women has contributed to the implementation of the policy guidance provided by the Commission, including examples of programme work and activities at the country level.

* E/CN.6/2013/1.

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# I. Introduction

1. The present report summarizes how the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) carried out its normative mandate in 2012, as set out in General Assembly resolution 64/289, as well as in line with the goal of its strategic plan, 2011-2013 (UNW/2011/9) to support the development of a comprehensive set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment that is dynamic and responds to new and emerging issues, challenges and opportunities. The Entity has contributed to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women not only in gender-specific intergovernmental processes but also in relevant sectoral intergovernmental processes. In this regard, UN-Women sought to expand and deepen norms and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women, both as an end in itself and as an essential step in the realization of human rights, peace and security and development.

2. The Entity has delivered on its normative mandate through its work with and substantive support to the Commission on the Status of Women, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, to which UN-Women reports routinely on agenda items on gender equality and the advancement of women. UN-Women also engaged with sectoral intergovernmental bodies to strengthen attention to gender equality and the empowerment of women in their deliberations and outcomes.

3. In its work with all these bodies, UN-Women has combined various approaches, including building strategic partnerships with stakeholders to strengthen consensus on gender equality and women's empowerment priorities. It has incorporated best practices and lessons learned from its regional and national experiences in its normative work. UN-Women has also worked with Governments, including with national parliaments, gender ministries and other relevant ministries, and civil society, to translate agreed norms into national policies and programmes and to monitor and accelerate their implementation.

4. In accordance with the Entity's coordination mandate, UN-Women is also supporting and mobilizing the United Nations system to uphold and incorporate these norms, particularly those on gender mainstreaming, in their respective areas of work. UN-Women is working to build and strengthen a knowledge base that reflects substantive information and know-how as well as lessons learned and experiences in implementation in order to strengthen its own positioning to undertake these functions and support this work.

5. Subsequent sections of the present report summarize the work and some of the outcomes of UN-Women engagement in various intergovernmental processes. Section II discusses how the Entity has worked to deepen the normative aspects of work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Section III addresses specific aspects of the work of UN-Women that support the implementation of the policy guidance provided by the Commission on the Status of Women. The section focuses on a central message contained in the guidance transmitted on several occasions in the agreed conclusions and other outcomes of the Commission, to promote the incorporation, integration or mainstreaming of gender perspectives in

the development and implementation of national legislation, policies, strategies, programmes and projects.[1]

# II. Strengthening and deepening the normative aspects of the work of the Entity

## A. Commission on the Status of Women

6. Since the submission of the previous report on the topic (E/CN.6/2012/2) to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-sixth session, in 2012, UN-Women has further strengthened and intensified its activities and engagement with the Commission in order to enable the Commission to successfully fulfil its function as the global policymaking body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment and advancement of women.

7. The Entity's support to the Commission relates to the preparation of outputs and activities mandated by Economic and Social Council resolutions 2006/9 and 2009/15, which outline the working methods of the Commission and its multi-year programme of work. In this regard, for the fifty-sixth session of the Commission, UN-Women prepared documentation for the session, including two reports of the Secretary-General on the priority theme, which provided in-depth perspectives on the situation of rural women, their roles in their communities and in national development, and ways to empower them in these roles (E/CN.6/2012/3 and E/CN.6/2012/4). Preparation of the reports on the priority theme was guided by the resolution on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session (resolution 66/129).

8. In addition to those reports, UN-Women prepared documentation for the panel discussions on the priority theme, emerging issues theme and the review theme. The documentation provided substantive analysis on the issues in order to inform Member States in their deliberations and further work in those areas. The summaries by the Chair on the high-level round table and the two panels on the priority theme were prepared by UN-Women, and were transmitted to the Economic and Social Council as input for the annual ministerial review at its substantive session of 2012.

9. UN-Women intensified its outreach to civil society organizations, with the aim of further increasing their contribution to and involvement in the session of the Commission and of establishing a strong basis for follow-up of the outcomes of the session. An unprecedented number of civil society representatives, including rural women and women at the grass-roots level, thus participated in the fifty-sixth session of the Commission and its side and parallel events.

10. While the discussions at the fifty-sixth session of the Commission did not result in agreed conclusions on the priority theme,[2] key resolutions were adopted, tackling such issues as women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts; gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters; maternal mortality

[1] See the reports of the Commission on the Status of Women on its forty-seventh, fifty-first, fifty-second and fifty-fifth sessions (E/2003/27, E/2007/27, E/2008/27 and E/2011/27).

[2] In the absence of agreed conclusions, the Chair made a summary available: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw56/documents/Chair_summary_AC_25_May_2012_AS%20POSTED.pdf.

and morbidity; indigenous women; and women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS.[3] The reports[4] of the Secretary-General prepared by UN-Women strengthened the substantive underpinnings of those resolutions and contributed to enriching discussions and the identification of actions to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in the areas covered by the resolutions.

11. In preparation for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission and in response to strong expectations for a successful conclusion of the session with the priority theme of "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls", UN-Women began consultations with key stakeholders at an early stage of the preparatory process for the session and to a much larger extent than undertaken in previous years. The Entity developed a comprehensive strategy focusing on preparing a strong substantive basis and broad-based support for strengthening normative standards on the priority theme. As part of this strategy, UN-Women undertook proactive and sustained engagement with stakeholders, including Member States, the United Nations system, civil society, academic experts and the private sector, for substantive preparations and to forge partnerships in the lead-up to the session. In the process, UN-Women engaged all parts of the Entity, including its field offices, which provide support to Governments in their preparations for the upcoming session of the Commission.

12. As part of its substantive preparations and to ensure a multi-sectoral perspective, UN-Women closely engaged with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in convening an Expert Group Meeting related to the priority theme, which was held from 17 to 20 September 2012 in Bangkok. The meeting brought together a broad group of stakeholders to contribute to a deeper understanding of the critical issues surrounding the priority theme. UN-Women also engaged the United Nations system in preparatory work through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality.

13. UN-Women organized an online discussion on the priority theme, providing an open forum to identify measures and good practices from different parts of the world and in diverse resource settings and highlight any emerging issues and practices that should be considered. This broad outreach enabled UN-Women to gather a wide range of contributions, concerns and recommendations on the prevention of and response to violence against women and girls.[5] The perspectives gained during these discussions were reflected in the two reports of the Secretary-General on the priority theme prepared by UN-Women for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission (E/CN.6/2013/3 and E/CN.6/2013/4).

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[3] See resolutions 56/1-56/5, contained in the report of the Commission on its fifty-sixth session (E/2012/27 and Corr.1).

[4] See E/CN.6/2012/3, E/CN.6/2012/4, E/CN.6/2012/6, E/CN.6/2012/7, E/CN.6/2012/8, E/CN.6/2012/9, E/CN.6/2012/10 and E/CN.6/2012/11.

[5] Detailed recommendations are available from www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Report-of-the-EGM-on-Prevention-of-Violence-against-Women-and-Girls.pdf. The report on the online discussion is available from www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Online-Discussion-Report_CSW-57.pdf.

14. A stakeholders' forum was organized by UN-Women in December 2012 to mobilize champions, policymakers, practitioners from the field and negotiators and garner political will to forge a consensus towards the reaffirmation and deepening of the normative framework on eliminating violence against women and girls. The forum also aimed at strengthening multi-stakeholder networks and approaches to deepen the existing normative framework and accelerate its implementation. Attended by high-level participants, including ministers and a large number of permanent representatives, as well as by members of civil society and survivors of gender-based violence, the forum engaged participants in an open and frank discussion on the criticality of reaching a strong outcome on the priority theme of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission. The forum also raised awareness of existing commitments and standards for ending violence against women and girls; provided a platform for sharing ideas and strategies that bring results; and identified key areas and issues where consensus needs strengthening. Forum participants highlighted the crucial importance of the normative dimensions of the work on eliminating violence against women and girls and stressed the importance of ensuring implementation of the agreements that would be reached during the Commission's session.

15. Furthermore, UN-Women engaged key partners at the regional level to complement global efforts geared towards fostering consensus on a successful outcome of the Commission's fifty-seventh session. For example, the Entity worked with the Latin American Parliament to draft a resolution in support of a strong outcome to the upcoming session of the Commission. The resolution was adopted by nearly 200 parliamentarians from 23 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. After consultations with UN-Women, the Presidential Summit of the Union of South American Nations issued a Declaration that emphasized the commitment of Heads of State and Government to prevent, sanction and eradicate violence against women and girls. The Entity also partnered in three regional conferences with the Council of Europe, focusing on advocating for the signature and ratification of Council of Europe Convention No. 210 on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

16. Recognizing the important feedback loop between the implementation of commitments and the affirmation and deepening of normative agreements, UN-Women also launched the "Commit" initiative[6] to mobilize concrete commitments from Governments to prevent and address violence against women and girls. Through this initiative, the Entity is calling on Governments everywhere to make public commitments to end violence against women and girls.

17. The intense preparatory effort that UN-Women has launched towards the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women will culminate in the Entity's direct servicing of the meeting from 4 to 15 March 2013. To this end, UN-Women is working closely with the Bureau of the Commission to ensure a proactive approach so as to secure a successful outcome. This includes providing support to reach strong agreed conclusions that will contribute to accelerating the implementation of commitments to end violence against women and girls, including passing new legislation where it does not exist, effectively implementing legislation where it does, as well as prioritizing, investing in and scaling up successful prevention and response programmes.

[6] http://saynotoviolence.org/commit.

## B. General Assembly

18. The Entity contributed to advancing gender equality in the deliberations of the General Assembly in a range of areas, from rule of law to sustainable development, to operational activities and others. At the sixty-seventh session of the Assembly, UN-Women actively engaged in preparations for the first-ever high-level meeting on the rule of law, hosted by the Assembly to discuss and agree on a forward-looking agenda on strengthening the rule of law at the national and international levels. Together with nine other United Nations system entities, UN-Women contributed to the drafting of the report of the Secretary-General (A/66/749, see also A/67/290) and participated in earlier consultations on the substance of the report. Elements of the report contributed to the first draft of the negotiated outcome document for the high-level meeting and UN-Women closely monitored negotiations on declaration adopted at the meeting (General Assembly resolution 67/1) in order to ensure that references to women's access to justice were retained.

19. The high-level meeting also became the platform for Member States to make pledges addressing gender equality or women's issues with respect to the rule of law. In preparation for the event, UN-Women conducted informal briefings to delegations, outlining suggested lists of pledges. A total of 12 Member States, regional groups and observers made initial pledges at the event.

20. In addition to its contributions to high-level events, UN-Women prepared parliamentary documentation, in which progress achieved and lessons learned in implementing earlier resolutions of the General Assembly were assessed. The documentation includes reports of the Secretary-General,[7] which were cited or quoted by delegations in elaborating resolutions, adopted at the sixty-seventh session of the Assembly, that address several areas of work, as described below.

21. For example, the recommendation to take greater action on issues that make women and girls vulnerable to trafficking and to consider awareness-raising measures (General Assembly resolution 67/145). Similarly a resolution on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women (resolution 67/144) strengthens existing norms on this issue by, inter alia, calling on States to adopt various measures, including on protection and prevention, as well as data collection and research. It also calls for measures to promote and protect women's equal access to public health-care services, including for sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights.

22. General Assembly resolution 67/148 strongly reflected elements of the analysis contained in the report UN-Women had prepared on the subject (A/67/185), in which the Entity found that less than one third of Assembly resolutions adopted at the sixty-sixth session included a gender perspective. The resolution welcomes the commitment of UN-Women to supporting Member States' efforts to develop and strengthen norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women as well as to integrate gender perspectives into sectoral policy and normative frameworks. It also commends UN-Women efforts to ensure coherence throughout the United Nations system in its advocacy for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the context of sustainable development. The resolution reiterates a call for United Nations entities to increase efforts to fully mainstream a

[7] See A/67/220, A/67/170, A/67/185 and A/67/347.

gender perspective into all issues under their consideration and within their mandates, as well as in all United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions and in their follow-up processes. Furthermore, the resolution calls for the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women to feature prominently in discussions on the post-2015 development framework, bearing in mind the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective.

23. The Entity's substantive support and advocacy were critical to Member States in reaching agreement on those resolutions. Support was provided through compiling drafts of resolutions, researching and offering clarification to Member States, as needed, and responding to questions arising during deliberations.

24. The report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women (A/67/201) presented an overview of the progress made in implementing General Assembly resolution 64/289, including through normative work. The report highlighted considerable progress made in ensuring the linkage between the normative and operational work of the Entity and was commended by a number of delegations as evidence of progress in responding to the founding mandate of UN-Women. The report also noted how UN-Women had used intergovernmental forums focusing specifically on gender equality to reaffirm and strengthen existing norms and standards and highlight gaps in implementation; and how the Entity had consistently pushed for gender equality and women's empowerment to be considered both as cross-cutting and stand-alone issues central to development, human rights and peace and security.

25. In support of efforts to identify ways of strengthening the further implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and at the request of Member States, UN-Women provided information and policy advice on options for commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The information helped to inform the deliberations of Member States on resolution 67/148. UN-Women is committed to playing a central role, taking advantage of its joint normative and operational mandates, in the preparatory activities for such commemorations.

26. Apart from the work of UN-Women on agenda items specifically related to gender equality and the empowerment of women, the Entity also intensified outreach and advocacy to ensure that an increased number of resolutions proposed by the Committees of the General Assembly, other than those of the Third Committee, reflect relevant gender equality norms and perspectives. As a result of this advocacy and support, the First Committee, in its resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control (resolution 67/48), explicitly referred to the role of UN-Women in promoting implementation of all resolutions related to women in the context of peace and security. Of even greater significance is the resolution's call for the empowerment of women to participate in the design and implementation of disarmament and related efforts.

27. Building on the expertise it had gained at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, UN-Women helped secure broad support for the inclusion of gender perspectives in various resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session in relation to sustainable development. As a result, five

resolutions[8] on sustainable development contain a recognition of the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment and such references were additionally secured in the resolution on international trade and development (resolution 67/196).

28. As a composite entity with normative as well as operational mandates, UN-Women contributed to and closely followed the discussions of the General Assembly on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. UN-Women brought together its normative and operational experiences as contributions to the process. It provided input to the preparatory work undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, including on the development of data collection tools, and drafted a conference room paper in which it assessed gender mainstreaming in United Nations operational activities for development. In the context of the discussions of the Assembly, the Entity worked with Member States, as requested, to provide information on or to clarify language related to gender equality contained in the draft resolution on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. The resolution adopted by the Assembly on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (resolution 67/226) reflects a number of UN-Women contributions and priorities. It calls upon the United Nations system to increase investment in, and focus on, gender equality and women's empowerment. The section on gender equality recognizes UN-Women's essential contribution to the United Nations system's work on gender equality and women's empowerment and calls on United Nations entities to mainstream gender perspectives and strengthen their accountability through their use of accountability instruments such as the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and country team performance indicators.

## C. Economic and Social Council

29. UN-Women highlighted key aspects of the Entity's work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through both its normative and operational work at the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council for 2012. The Entity strived to give prominence and visibility to gender equality and women's empowerment priorities through the participation of senior managers in key segments of the session. Messages articulated in various forums contributed to the ministerial declaration, adopted at the high-level segment, on "Promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals".

30. The Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women participated in a number of high-level events, including the Development Cooperation Forum, at which she gave a keynote address and in the annual dialogue with Executive Heads of United Nations funds and programmes, which focused on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. In the Development Cooperation Forum, the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director drew attention not only to the importance of the work on gender equality in both its operational and normative aspects, but also

[8] See General Assembly resolutions 67/203, 67/209, 67/210, 67/211 and 67/215.

to the nexus between gender equality and the broader issue of development cooperation.

31. UN-Women prepared the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/2012/61), with contributions from the United Nations system. The report documented progress made in gender mainstreaming, identified the remaining gaps and challenges and summarized aspects of UN-Women work in leading, coordinating and promoting accountability of the United Nations system in its efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

32. The report highlighted the adoption by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and UN-Women leadership in its development. In its resolution 2012/24, the Economic and Social Council welcomed the adoption of the System-wide Action Plan as an accountability framework to be fully implemented by the United Nations system, called upon the system to actively engage in its roll-out and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its substantive session of 2013 on progress made in the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan. The System-wide Action Plan is firmly rooted in the mandate of UN-Women to lead, coordinate and promote accountability for the work of the United Nations system in gender equality and the empowerment of women. Since its adoption, with the support of UN-Women, eight United Nations entities[9] have fully aligned their gender equality policies, strategies and accountability frameworks performance indicators of the System-wide Action Plan and other entities are in the process of doing the same. The result of the first reporting cycle, which ends in mid-February 2013, will inform the next report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. It will also establish the baseline against which future progress in implementing the performance standards of the System-wide Action Plan will be measured.

33. UN-Women also partnered with the International Labour Organization (ILO) for a ministerial breakfast round table on decent work and women's economic empowerment. The event was a platform for gender-sensitive dialogue with Governments, guided by the evidence-based concept note prepared by UN-Women and ILO. It was an occasion to forge partnerships with Governments to advance and promote gender perspectives in the ministerial declaration and in carrying out programmatic work related to this theme at the global, regional and country levels. Recommendations and the exchange of good practices on labour policies, decent work and women's empowerment that emanated from the discussions were reflected in the ministerial declaration, wherein Member States recognized the importance of promoting and protecting the rights of women workers, of taking action to remove structural and legal barriers to, and of eliminating stereotypical attitudes towards, gender equality at work, and initiating positive steps towards the promotion of equal pay for equal work or for work of equal value. As a follow-up, UN-Women and ILO

[9] The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

collaborated on the publication of the flagship report on Global Employment Trends for Women, which was launched in December 2012. The report analyses gender gaps in unemployment, employment, labour force participation, vulnerability and segregation in jobs and economic sectors and provides a set of policy options to promote gender equality in employment, especially in times of economic and financial crisis.

34. As part of its contribution to the preparations of the Economic and Social Council for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, UN-Women organized a side event on gender equality and the empowerment of women in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, in collaboration with UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP). The event was a useful platform to advance the discussions of Member States on the same topic at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. At the side event, panellists from Member States and the United Nations system emphasized the importance of ensuring that the work on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment be a common responsibility of the United Nations system and that the creation of UN-Women should not relieve other agencies of the mandate to deliver on gender equality and women's empowerment. Similarly underscored was the importance of accountability mechanisms, including the System-wide Action Plan, as tools to hold agencies accountable and ensure gender mainstreaming in their work.

## D. Security Council

35. The Entity continued to actively promote and support the implementation of Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security (1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010)) at the global, regional and national levels. UN-Women has contributed to the effective integration of these resolutions across the work of the Council. It has strengthened the evidence base for policy development and implementation through research and analysis on matters such as systems for early alerts of security threats to women; levels of participation of women in peace processes and the consequences thereof; the impact of women's employment on the speed and sustainability of post-conflict recovery; levels of financing for gender equality and women's empowerment in post-conflict situations; and modalities for effective reparations programmes for war crimes perpetrated against women.

36. For the annual review by the Security Council of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), UN-Women coordinated the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General to the Council on women and peace and security (S/2012/732) through an inter-agency consultative process. The report assesses the state of implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the areas of conflict prevention, women's participation in peacebuilding, protection from gender-based violence, and gender-responsive relief and recovery and puts forward a set of policy recommendations for the consideration of the Council and the Member States.

37. Many of the elements presented in the report were reflected in the presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/23) adopted by the Security Council in connection with the annual review. In the statement, the Council recognized and welcomed the role of UN-Women in contributing to the implementation of resolutions on women and peace and security and noted with satisfaction the increased coordination and

coherence in policy and programming for women and girls within the United Nations system, welcoming efforts to avoid duplication and overlap since the creation of UN-Women. The statement also reflected new elements and concerns raised in the report of the Secretary-General, notably the need to prevent an erosion of the protection environment for women and girls during and after the drawdown of United Nations missions. For the first time, it also reflected the stress placed in the report on the crucial role played by women's civil society organizations in conflict prevention and peacemaking and the Council noted the value of gender expertise in peacekeeping and post-conflict contexts.

38. A number of initiatives led by UN-Women in close collaboration with the United Nations system and other partners in the area of women and peace and security in the past two years have helped to drive and strengthen normative work in this area, including through improved tracking and monitoring of results. These include the agreement and incremental reporting on the initial set of indicators to track the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), steps taken to implement the seven-point action plan of the Secretary-General on gender-responsive peacebuilding (see S/2012/732 and A/65/354-S/2010/466), the adoption of the United Nations strategic results framework on women and peace and security, and the civilian capacity review and related review of the United Nations gender architecture in post-conflict countries. These initiatives have improved documentation of good practices, the assessment of gaps and challenges and the identification of shared targets and areas that need further attention, all of which contribute to the development of more evidence-based policy recommendations and improved normative work.

39. In the past year, UN-Women also provided substantive inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict (A/67/499-S/2012/746) and strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution (A/66/811) and inputs for field missions of the Security Council. In addition, the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director continued to provide special briefings to the Council on topics related to women and peace and security. The briefings are an important complement to the annual reviews and a channel for highlighting good practices and bringing to the attention of the Council specific areas and situations of concern related to the implementation of global commitments on women, peace and security for action. UN-Women, in partnership with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security also continued to offer technical updates on women, peace and security to new members of the Council. Complementing these initiatives at the global level, UN-Women worked closely with the League of Arab States to contextualize the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) for the Arab region. This resulted in the signing of the document "Protection of Arab women: peace and security" by the League of Arab States and UN-Women, which sets the framework for the development of plans and programmes on human security for Arab women.

40. UN-Women normative support for intergovernmental processes in the area of peace and security continued to benefit from operational work to implement commitments on women, peace and security, in such areas as: strengthening women's peace coalitions; capacity-building for peacekeepers to help detect and prevent conflict-related sexual violence; support for building justice and security

institutions that protect women and girls from violence and discrimination and for initiatives to promote public services that respond to women's needs, including on ensuring access to economic opportunities; building women's engagement in public decision-making; and support for the development and implementation of regional and national action plans and strategies for the implementation of commitments relating to women, peace and security. The "Sourcebook on women, peace and security" launched by UN-Women in October 2012[10] captures the linkages between the operational and normative work and contributes to both policy and practice.

## E. Engagement in selected sectoral intergovernmental processes

41. Through its substantive contribution, technical expertise, advocacy, awareness-raising and outreach to Member States, UN-Women was successful in securing references on the importance of gender equality and advancing women's rights and their empowerment in the outcomes of various sectoral intergovernmental processes. These included the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development; the thirteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; and the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. UN-Women is also contributing to ongoing processes on the development agenda beyond 2015 and sustainable development goals.

### United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

42. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development delivered important gains for gender equality with the reaffirmation in the outcome document of the centrality of gender equality and women's vital role, participation and leadership in all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental). UN-Women strategically and actively engaged throughout the entire process surrounding the Conference. It made comprehensive contributions to the draft of the outcome document, proactively engaged in the negotiation process through outreach and technical assistance to Member States, the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference and the secretariat for the Conference, contributed to United Nations system messaging and worked to strengthen partnerships, including through its collaboration with civil society, in particular, the women's major group and the private sector. Furthermore, UN-Women intensified its communications and advocacy through the media, including social media, and organized a multi-stakeholder Women Leaders' Forum, which brought together Governments, civil society, the private sector, academia and other advocates to highlight strategies and programmes that foster gender equality and sustainable development. UN-Women also convened women Heads of State and Government in a Women Leaders' High-level Summit, where they issued a joint "Call to action" to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of sustainable development.

43. These efforts catalysed political will among Governments and were instrumental in the endorsement of an outcome document (General Assembly resolution 66/288) that reaffirms Governments' commitment to the Beijing

[10] Available from www.unwomen.org/publications/un-women-sourcebook-on-women-peace-and-security/.

Declaration and Platform for Action and recognizes women's vital role, participation and leadership in all three dimensions of sustainable development. Gender equality and women's empowerment are identified as a thematic area in the framework for action and follow-up. In the outcome document, Member States commit to ensuring women's equal rights, access and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy, society, political decision-making and resource allocation and affirm that green economy policies should enhance the welfare of women and mobilize their full potential, and ensure the equal contribution of women and men.

44. In the outcome document, donors and international organizations, including the United Nations system organizations, international financial institutions, regional banks and major groups, including the private sector, are invited to fully integrate commitments and considerations on gender equality and the empowerment of women and to ensure the participation of women and effective gender mainstreaming in their decision-making and full programming cycle. Those same actors were also invited to play a supportive role in the efforts of developing countries to do the same.

45. UN-Women helped secure explicit references to women, women's empowerment and gender equality in 12 critical thematic areas, including poverty eradication, food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture, energy, water and sanitation, health and population, employment, decent work for all and social protection, and disaster risk reduction.

46. The outcome document also laid a solid basis for the inclusion of gender equality and women's empowerment in the consideration of Sustainable Development Goals and the future development framework.

**Thirteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

47. UN-Women actively participated in the thirteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, including in a high-level event on women in development. The event was critical in sensitizing Ministers to the need to give a prominent place to gender equality and women's empowerment in the outcome documents of the meeting. UN-Women highlighted the critical nexus between empowering rural women, global food security, trade and sustainable development and underscored the importance of linking the deliberations to related international norms, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the General Assembly resolution on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas (resolution 66/129), among others. The Entity's work with countries to implement gender-responsive budgeting and planning was also highlighted as an important tool to strengthen these linkages in practice.

48. Joint efforts with the secretariat of the Conference and targeted advocacy resulted in the inclusion of several gender-specific references in the two outcome documents of the Conference. The declaration adopted by Member States, the "Doha Manar" (TD/500/Add.2) emphasizes the importance of creating opportunities, capacities and decent jobs for women and the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment to harness the full potential of the whole population in support of fuller human, economic and social development. The "Doha Mandate" (TD/500/Add.1) contains the recognition that gender equality and women's empowerment are important cross-cutting issues for inclusive and sustainable

growth and development. Building on that mandate, the Conference and UN-Women have increased cooperation in the field of women's economic empowerment through initiatives to build evidence and knowledge in this area and through targeted regional and country projects.

**Eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

49. Building on the gains in securing gender-specific language in decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions, UN-Women attendance at the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties helped ensure that women's needs, rights and opportunities and considerations regarding gender equality, as well as appropriate gender-specific references, are reflected in the decisions adopted at the Conference. In the lead-up to and at the Conference of the Parties, UN-Women engaged with key delegations, United Nations system entities and civil society partners and advocates for the incorporation of a gender perspective in the decisions to be adopted.

50. UN-Women was commended for its role and contribution in the adoption of the decision on promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in negotiations on the Framework Convention and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol. The Entity provided substantive knowledge on norms in this area, some of which were included in the initial draft of the decision, as well as technical assistance and substantive support throughout negotiations. Parties sought its expertise in the course of amending the text of the decision.

51. The aforementioned decision represents a significant contribution to advancing gender equality in the process surrounding the Framework Convention. In it, the Conference of the Parties adopted a goal of gender balance in bodies established under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, in order to improve women's participation and inform more effective climate change policy that addresses the needs of women and men equally. In addition, current and future chairs of such bodies were invited to be guided by this goal when setting up informal negotiating groups and consultation mechanisms, and Parties were invited to strive for gender balance in their delegations to sessions under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

52. The decision also incorporates a reporting mechanism whereby the secretariat of the Framework Convention was requested to present an annual report tracking the progress made towards the goal of gender balance to the Conference of the Parties for its consideration. Of utmost significance in the text is the decision to add gender and climate change as a new standing item on the agenda of sessions of the Conference of the Parties. Together with other advocates, UN-Women undertook outreach to delegations to secure gender-specific references in other decisions, including on loss and damage, national adaptation plans, the Climate Technology Centre and Network, and the Doha work programme on article 6 of the Convention pertaining to education, training and public awareness of climate change and its effects.

**Development agenda beyond 2015 and sustainable development goals**

53. UN-Women is actively involved in the work on the development agenda beyond 2015 and the sustainable development goals, in collaboration with civil society organizations, the United Nations system and other partners. UN-Women is co-leading, with UNICEF, the global inequalities consultation, one of the 11 global thematic consultations convened by the United Nations Development Group. Engaging a broad range of stakeholders through online consultations, UN-Women and partner entities aim to present a solid document containing recommendations on how to address inequalities in the development agenda beyond 2015 that could inform the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the intergovernmental process discussing the sustainable development goals. The Entity is also contributing to the thematic and country-level consultations by ensuring that the voices of women and women's organizations are heard in country consultations organized by resident coordinators and country teams. UN-Women representatives are also working closely with country teams to ensure that gender equality concerns are made central to the process.

54. UN-Women is closely following developments on the sustainable development goals process. It has provided technical inputs, which were shared with Member States, the United Nations system and members of the High-level Panel.

55. UN-Women membership and representation in task forces, coordination groups and task teams created for these processes positions the Entity to contribute directly to the conceptualization and framing of the development agenda beyond 2015. Within UN-Women, substantive work is being carried out to build the case for a stand-alone gender equality goal and for mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment in the other goals. This is coupled with the development of key messages and their dissemination, and the strengthening of UN-Women advocacy work and outreach to key stakeholders, including Member States and civil society.

## III. Implementation of the policy guidance by the Commission on the Status of Women

56. Through its work, the Commission on the Status of Women provides guidance to Governments, entities of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector and other relevant actors on actions required for the achievement of goals relating to issues on the agenda of the Commission and especially with regard to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

57. UN-Women, as the substantive secretariat of the Commission and in line with its areas of work, continues to play a role in the implementation of that policy guidance, both as a primary actor and in its support to other stakeholders.

58. The guidance to promote the incorporation, integration or mainstreaming of gender perspectives in the development and implementation of national legislation, policies, strategies, programmes and projects has been selected as a focus in the present report, given its recurrence in the agreed conclusions of the Commission. Key actions that contributed to strengthening the normative basis for the

incorporation of gender perspectives into national level policies and implementation have been clearly identified.

59. Owing to its combined normative and operational mandate, UN-Women is also well placed to support actors at the country level in implementing that policy guidance, and in particular to ensure that work at the country level is based on and aims to further strengthen existing norms. UN-Women has thus supported the implementation of the guidance of the Commission through its operational work, especially in priority areas of work identified in the Entity's strategic plan, 2011-2013.

60. The Entity has provided support in 71 countries to enhance legal frameworks and national capacities; in 67 countries, to promote women's economic opportunities; in 85 countries, to work to end violence against women and girls; in 37 countries, to improve women's role and leadership in peace, security and humanitarian response; and in 65 countries, to work to promote gender-responsive planning and budgeting.

61. In partnership with the United Nations system, UN-Women continues to support national efforts to expand economic opportunities for women through the incorporation of a gender perspective in policies and programmes.[11] For example, the joint programme of UN-Women, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and WFP on "Accelerating progress towards the economic empowerment of rural women", launched in September 2012, focuses on empowering rural women through promoting legislative and policy reforms for the effective enforcement of rural women's land rights and their access to decent wage employment, social protection and infrastructure, and providing policy assistance to Governments to support their efforts to mainstream gender into their food, agriculture, nutrition and rural development policies. The five-year programme will be implemented in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, the Niger and Rwanda.

62. Since becoming one of the co-sponsoring agencies for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in June 2012, UN-Women is now well positioned to take forward the guidance of the Commission related to gender equality, women's empowerment and HIV/AIDS. In 2011-2012, UN-Women worked with national AIDS coordinating authorities in 22 countries to integrate gender equality perspectives into HIV strategies, policies, laws, institutions, budgets and accountability frameworks. With UN-Women support, a gender audit helped the National AIDS Authority and Ministry of Women Affairs of Cambodia define key advocacy points to back the integration of gender dimensions across the 2011-2015 National Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS. In the Sudan, UN-Women joined UNAIDS in educating those working on the country's National AIDS Control Programme about the gender dimensions of HIV, resulting in the adoption of a variety of related measures in the Sudan National AIDS Strategic Plan 2010-2014.

63. Gender-responsive budgeting has been identified as a key strategy to promote the incorporation, integration or mainstreaming of gender perspectives into national

[11] See the reports of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fifty-second, fifty-third, fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions (E/2008/27, E/2009/27, E/2010/27 and Corr.1 and E/2011/27).

plans, policies and programmes. This has been reaffirmed in the agreed conclusions of several sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women.[12]

64. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, UN-Women provided technical support to the Government for the adoption of its first strategy on gender-responsive budgeting. The strategy includes developing gender mainstreaming norms and guidelines to ensure that men and women benefit equally from public sector services. The official government budget circular for 2013 was amended to require line ministries to develop output indicators disaggregated by gender, in order to measure the impact of government programmes on women and men.

65. In Zimbabwe, the Women's Resource Centre and Network, a grantee of the Fund for Gender Equality, is building capacity in 13 sector ministries, including health, water, resources and energy, and small and medium enterprises, to mainstream gender planning and costing in their work so that women can access essential services effectively. Capacity-building efforts have also been extended to legislators, advocates and civil society organizations to help them better understand the importance of gender-responsive budgeting and thereby help ensure its effective application.

66. As a result of the grantee's advocacy around gender-responsive budgeting, the Government of Zimbabwe initiated the Women's Development Fund to support women's economic initiatives. The project and stakeholders also influenced the drafting of the National Budget for 2012 to include specific allocations towards reproductive health and maternal health and the improvement of the lives of rural women through allocations to line ministries such as water, resources and energy.

67. An innovative example of incorporating gender perspectives into urban planning and implementing the policy guidance of the Commission is the Safe Cities global initiative. Initiated by UN-Women with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), local governments, women's networks, civil society partners and other United Nations entities, the approach emphasizes the prevention of violence, government accountability, community mobilization and participation, the empowerment of women at the grass-roots level, the engaging of men and boys, and overall improvement of neighbourhoods and sustainable and inclusive urban development. From its initial five pilot cities in Cairo, Kigali, New Delhi, Quito and Port Moresby, it has since expanded via a new joint programme with UNICEF and UN-Habitat to include Greater Beirut (Lebanon), Dushanbe, Metro Manila (Philippines), Marrakesh (Morocco), Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), San José and Tegucigalpa. Initial results show that local governments have taken active measures to make urban spaces more gender-sensitive and reduce violence against women and girls, including by amending city legislations, plans and budgets to incorporate "safe cities" measures, enhancing women's safety and improving gender-responsive policing services through gender-responsive social protection schemes, and empowering local women to identify safety and security conditions through women's safety audits.

68. The passing of a parity law in Senegal in 2010, with the support from UN-Women contributed to increasing the political participation of women in the country. UN-Women supported a coalition of Senegalese women from the country's

[12] See the reports of the Commission on its fiftieth, fifty-first, fifty-second, fifty-third and fifty-fifth sessions (E/2006/27 and Corr. 1 and 2, E/2007/27, E/2008/27, E/2009/27 and E/2011/27).

various political parties and women researchers in advocating for the passing of a law providing for equal distribution of seats between women and men in parliament and full equal representation in all elected and semi-elected bodies and at all levels. UN-Women provided technical support to the draft legislation committee and supported a sustained large-scale public awareness initiative in collaboration with national partners so as to garner greater support for the adoption of the parity law. The parliamentary election in 2012 demonstrated progress in gender equality with 65 Senegalese women elected as representatives (out of 150 seats).

69. Such examples illustrate some of the ways in which UN-Women implemented the policy guidance of the Commission through its operational work. In the coming years, UN-Women will heighten and systematize its ongoing efforts to bring the best practices and lessons learned from its operations on the ground into the intergovernmental debates and deliberations, in order to create a feedback loop so that global efforts to strengthen norms and standards, along with national actions, inform and complement each other and make a real difference in women's daily lives.

# IV. Conclusions

70. **Building on its work in the past two years and on important lessons learned, including from its own analysis, UN-Women successfully brought greater attention to the gender equality agenda in intergovernmental processes and helped to forge a mutually reinforcing link between normative work and its implementation on the ground. In implementing the policy guidance of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Entity, beyond bringing concrete results for women and girls on the ground, also contributed to deepening and enlarging the normative base and to informing intergovernmental processes. Member States should keep leveraging the unique role of the Commission on the Status of Women as the primary global body for building consensus on norms and standards to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as monitor their implementation. UN-Women will further support the work of the Commission and contribute to the implementation of the outcomes of the sessions of the Commission.**

71. **UN-Women will continue to develop and strengthen the seamlessness of the link between the normative and operational aspects of its work. Given the synergy between its normative and operational activities and the comprehensive delivery by UN-Women of its mandate, Member States may wish to consider how these activities may best be reflected in future reporting.**

United Nations E/CN.6/2013/3

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 December 2012

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
Fifty-seventh session
4-15 March 2013
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

## Multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence

### Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report examines the extent to which Governments have implemented multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence. It identifies gaps and good practices and concludes with a number of recommendations for future action for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-seventh session.

* E/CN.6/2013/1.

12-65384 (E) 070113

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# I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women will consider as its priority theme the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. The present report examines the extent to which Governments have implemented multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence and to provide protection from future violence.[1] The present report, prepared pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolutions 2006/9 and 2009/15, incorporates an analysis of contributions by Member States[2] and draws on recent research and analysis and on information and data from United Nations entities and other sources as indicated. It concludes with recommendations for future action for the consideration of the Commission.

# II. Global and legal policy framework

2. According to the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (see General Assembly resolution 48/104), violence against women and girls means "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private" perpetrated by both State and non-State actors. It occurs in all countries, contexts and settings and is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights. In over three decades of efforts by the women's movement, civil society organizations and Governments, there have been many advances in responding to such violence. The obligation of States to take responsibility for responding to violence against women and girls is now part of the broad global human rights framework and is specified in a number of specific binding global conventions, agreements and resolutions.

3. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provides the overarching framework for addressing discrimination. The work of the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women provides a clear interpretation of the Convention by explicitly recognizing violence as a form of discrimination and stresses the responsibility and obligation of States to prevent and respond to violence under various articles in the Convention (see general recommendations 12 and 19 of the Committee).

4. Specific obligations are also contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular in article 19 thereof, which requires States to take measures to protect girls from violence, and in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which stresses the obligations of States to respond to violence against women and girls with disabilities. The General Observation concerning International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 111 obligates States parties to implement measures to address sexual harassment.

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[1] The prevention of violence against women and girls is addressed in a separate report of the Secretary-General on the priority theme (E/CN.6/2013/4).

[2] Argentina, Austria, Colombia, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Paraguay, Poland, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

5. The legal framework concerning violence against women and girls also comprises various resolutions of the General Assembly, including resolution 48/104, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (see resolution 61/295, annex, article 22) and a number of resolutions on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, as well as resolutions of the Human Rights Council and of the Security Council.[3] The actions States are required to take are clearly outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action, particularly in strategic objective D, and include the provision of multisectoral services and responses that are accessible to all women and girls. The Commission on the Status of Women previously addressed violence against women and girls in 2003, and in its agreed conclusions of 1998 and 2007.[4] The priority theme for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission provides an opportunity to consider current obligations by States and to strengthen the normative framework.

6. All these obligations are underpinned by the due diligence standard for responding to violence against women (see General Assembly resolution 48/104, article 4 (c)), to prevent, respond to, protect against and provide remedies for acts of violence against women committed by State or non-State actors.[5] In her report on the due diligence standard as a tool for the elimination of violence against women (E/CN.4/2006/61), the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences observed significant inconsistencies in the implementation and failure to exercise due diligence in this area including: in the enforcement of protective obligations, including by police and judiciary; an absence or inadequate provision of services such as shelters; and too much focus on short-term protection as opposed to more long-term assistance to assist women to avoid re-victimization. The Special Rapporteur is currently undertaking a global study that analyses the interpretation and implementation of the due diligence obligation by States, which will be the focus of her thematic report for 2013.[6]

7. The recommendations from the universal periodic review and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women continue to reinforce the obligations by States to ensure the enforcement of laws, the investigation of cases, the prosecution of perpetrators, the protection of and support for victims and the need to systematically collect and analyse disaggregated data on violence against women.

## III. Scope and current situation

### Scope

8. The present report contains a review of the current evidence on the nature, extent and impact of violence against women and girls; an evaluation of what progress has been made in developing and implementing comprehensive and

[3] See, for example, Human Rights Council resolutions 14/12, 17/11 and 20/12, and Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010).

[4] See E/2003/27-E/CN.6/2003/12, E/1998/27-E/CN.6/1998/12 and Corr.1 and E/2007/27-E/CN.6/2007/9.

[5] See the report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, E/CN.4/2006/61.

[6] For further information please see www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/SRWomen/Pages/VAW.aspx.

coordinated approaches to multisectoral services and responses; an examination of the quality and accessibility of such approaches; and an assessment of their effectiveness, including the extent to which services and responses ensure immediate response to and long-term recovery from the experience of violence and that all women and girls are protected from future violence.

9. The prevention of and response to violence requires States to act at each and every opportunity, beginning with preventing violence from happening at all to responding to violence in its aftermath. Comprehensive legal frameworks, enforcement mechanisms and multisectoral services that are available and accessible not only respond to and protect women and girls but also send a clear message to society that such violence is not acceptable. At the same time, prevention strategies not only work to stop violence, but raise awareness among the community and lead to more women and girls seeking protection and support.

**Nature, extent and consequences of violence against women and girls**

10. Violence against women and girls takes on many forms, including intimate partner violence; early and forced marriage; forced pregnancy; honour crimes; female genital mutilation; femicide; non-partner sexual violence; sexual harassment in the workplace, other institutions and in public spaces; trafficking; violence condoned by the State; and violence against women in conflict situations (see the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, A/61/122/Add.1 and Corr.1).

11. The prevalence rates for some forms of violence are better documented than others, as reported in the above-mentioned in-depth study. From the data that is available, it is estimated that as many as 7 out of 10 women experience physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime;[7] according to a global estimate of forced labour published by ILO in 2012, women and girls comprise 98 per cent of all people in forced sexual exploitation, the majority of whom are trafficked; between 100 and 140 million girls have been subject to female genital mutilations;[8] and, as reported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in its global study on homicide (2011), in some countries, between 40 and 70 per cent of female murder victims are killed by intimate partners.

12. Violence against women and girls also has both short- and long-term adverse consequences on their health and rights, including their reproductive rights.[9] The impact can range from severe physical effects, including serious injuries, and in terms of sexual and reproductive health, unintended pregnancies, gynaecological problems and sexually transmitted infections, to death. Intimate partner violence during pregnancy also increases the likelihood of miscarriage, stillbirth, pre-term delivery, poor obstetric outcomes and low birth weight.[10] Violence against women

[7] More information available from www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/facts_figures.html.

[8] More information available from www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/299-fast-facts-statistics-on-violence-against-women-and-girls-.html.

[9] See the report on combating gender-based violence prepared by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, 2005.

[10] Further information in publications of the World Health Organization, available from www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/rhr12_36/en/index.html and www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/rhr12_43/en/index.html.

can also lead to increased risk of HIV infection, particularly in the case of rape, when tears and lacerations may increase the vulnerability to HIV infection.[11] Violence can also be a consequence of women revealing their HIV status.[12]

13. There are significant mental health consequences for women subjected to violence and a higher risk of subsequent re-victimization.[12] An analysis of the data collected by the World Health Organization in a multi-country study, conducted in 13 urban and rural sites in 9 low- and middle-income countries, reveals that the most consistent risk factors for suicide attempts among women, outside of common mental health disorders, were intimate partner violence; non-partner physical violence; the experience of divorce, separation or widowhood; childhood sexual abuse; and having a mother who had experienced intimate partner violence.[13]

14. Violence also has significant consequences for girls in terms of physical, sexual, reproductive and mental health. Early exposure to violence can have an impact on brain maturity, leading to behaviours that cause social problems and increase susceptibility to lifelong social, emotional and cognitive impairments, to obesity and to behaviours that pose a risk to health, such as smoking, substance abuse and early sexual activity.[14]

15. The impact of violence can be intergenerational. Children who are exposed to domestic violence are at increased risk of anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and poor school performance. Children who have witnessed or been subject to such violence are more likely to become victims and abusers later in life. Surveys in Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, the Philippines, Poland and Switzerland revealed that boys who witnessed their father using violence against their mother were three times more likely to use violence against their partners later in life.[15] A similar correlation has also been observed in conflict-affected settings, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia.[16]

16. Violence against women and girls hinders social and economic development and reduces productivity. It has enormous direct and indirect costs for survivors, employers and the public sector in terms of health, police, legal and related expenditures as well as lost wages and productivity.[15] During times of economic crisis, measures by governments to reduce spending, uncertain aid budgets, rising

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[11] Rachel K. Jewkes et al., "Intimate partner violence, relationship power inequity, and incidence of HIV infection in young women in South Africa: a cohort study", *The Lancet*, vol. 376, No. 9734 (July 2010).

[12] Johanna Kehler et al., "If I knew what would happen, I would have kept it to myself", study on gender violence and HIV, 2012.

[13] K. Devries et al., "Violence against women is strongly associated with suicide attempts: evidence from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women", *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 73, No. 1, 2011.

[14] See the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) study on violence against children, available from www.unicef.org/violencestudy/1.%20World%20Report%20on%20Violence%20against%20Children.pdf; see also A/61/299.

[15] See further information and sources, available from www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/301-consequences-and-costs-.html.

[16] For more information, see the preliminary results of the international men and gender equality survey conducted by Promundo and Sonke Gender Justice Network, "Gender relations, sexual violence and the effects of conflict on women and men in North Kivu, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo" (2012); see also P. Vinck and P. N. Pham, "Association of exposure to intimate-partner physical violence and potentially traumatic war-related events with mental health in Liberia", *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 77.

unemployment and poverty increase the risks of violence towards women and girls, particularly in relation to domestic/family and intimate partner violence.[17]

17. Given the impact of economic circumstances on rates of violence against women and girls, States must provide the necessary social protection and support for women and girls at increased risk of exposure to violence and exploitation. Failure to do so results in the burden of care and support, and the responsibility for addressing violence, shifting back to women. The implementation of multisectoral services and responses requires adequate budget allocations determined through specific costing exercises that should be sustained even in times of austerity.

18. Violence against women and girls may also undermine key elements of successful post-conflict peacebuilding such as social stability, economic recovery, effective State authority and overall development. For example, elevated levels of sexual violence can impair women's willingness and ability to enter or engage in work, agricultural marketing activities or send their daughters to school.[18] In a post-conflict environment, there is also likely to be a greater proliferation of small arms, which increases the vulnerability of women and girls and exacerbates the seriousness of violence against them, including in the home.[19] This violence also needs to be addressed by States, as well as by humanitarian and development actors, through the provision of coordinated multisectoral responses and services.

## IV. Development of coordinated multisectoral responses and services

19. Coordinated responses are systematic approaches founded on the concept of comprehensive, collaborative and integrated service delivery.[20] Such approaches began in the United States of America over three decades ago, driven largely by women's organizations, in order to improve the relationship between the criminal justice sector and non-governmental agencies providing service to victims/survivors.[21] Since that time, it has become clear that no individual service sector is able to address the multidimensional and, in some cases, severe and long-lasting impacts of violence in a comprehensive manner. During the process of response, recovery and reintegration, women and girls require access to a range of services and responses in the short-, medium- and long-term to recover from the effects of such violence and to protect them from future violence.

20. The full range of multisectoral services and responses required have been described in many reports, including the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women (A/61/122/Add.1 and Corr.1), in many resolutions of the General

[17] See the discussion paper of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), "Impact of the global economic crisis on women, girls and gender equality", August 2012.

[18] Anne-Marie Goetz and Robert Jenkins, "Addressing Sexual Violence in Internationally Mediated Peace Negotiations", *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 17, No. 2, April 2010.

[19] See the report of the Expert Group Meeting on prevention of violence against women and girls, held in Bangkok, in September 2012. Available from www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Report-of-the-EGM-on-Prevention-of-Violence-against-Women-and-Girls.pdf.

[20] M. A. Adler, "The utility of modeling in evaluation planning: the case of the coordination of domestic violence services in Maryland", *Evaluation and Program Planning*, vol. 25. No. 3, August 2002.

[21] More information available from www.theduluthmodel.org/about/index.html.

Assembly and in reports of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. They include police and justice responses; shelters; legal aid; health-care services; psychosocial counselling and mental health care and support; non-statutory interventions for perpetrators (rehabilitation programmes); 24-hour hotline and online services; services for accompanying children in shelters; economic and employment assistance; social reintegration support; and reintegration of girls into education.[22]

21. It is important that these services work together in the most efficient and effective way to reduce the burden and impact on women and girls in the process of reporting, response and recovery. The secondary victimization experienced as part of reporting violence has long been an obstacle to women and girls seeking support and assistance, which has dire, and in some cases, fatal consequences.[23] These obstacles are especially acute in conflict-affected settings. The increased dangers associated with reporting results in underreporting and a lengthened period of time between incidence and reporting.

22. Coordinated multisectoral services and responses should also be linked to general health-care services. Often, women subjected to violence are more likely to interact with health-care providers (doctors, maternal and early childhood nurses, school counsellors) before directly accessing specialized services. As such, it is important for the provision of coordinated and multisectoral responses to have the necessary referral processes established with the broader health-care system.[24] When linked to broader sectors, there can be better interaction between the many different sectors working to end violence against women both through response and prevention, some of which overlap. To this end, the Expert Group Meeting on prevention recommended that prevention and response strategies be developed and implemented as a holistic and integrated system that upholds the human rights of girls and women to live in societies, communities and families that are free of such violence.[19]

23. Over the last three decades, various models of coordinated and multisectoral responses have been implemented in many countries, including: one-stop crisis centres where all relevant services are co-located;[25] comprehensive care models where additional services are included to respond to specific needs such as HIV/AIDS[26] or provide other support;[27] and the development of integrated service

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[22] See the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), "Handbook for national action plans on violence against women", 2012, section 3.5.

[23] Sarah Bott and others, "Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in middle- and low-income countries: a global review and analysis", Policy Research Working Paper, No. 3618 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2005).

[24] See the report of the International Center for Research on Women, "Intimate partner violence: high costs to households and communities", 2009.

[25] Such examples include those from Bangladesh, Malaysia, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zambia. See, for example, www.mspvaw.org.bd/occ.php; www.rapecrisis.org.UK/Referralcentres2.php; www.npa.gov.za/UploadedFiles/THUTHUZELA%20Brochure%20New.pdf; and http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACR569.pdf; and the study by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "Health sector response to gender-based violence: an assessment of the Asia Pacific region", Bangkok, 2010.

[26] More information available from www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/AfricaSGBV_KeyIssues.pdf. Such a model of service delivery also exists in Latin America.

[27] For example, a network of "Centros de Ciudad Mujer" in El Salvador. More information available from www.iadb.org/es/proyectos/project-information-page,1303.html?id=ES-L1056.

delivery models, which do not require services to be co-located but ensure the provision of comprehensive responses in a coordinated manner.[28] All of these models, however, require clear and transparent protocols between participating agencies, comprehensive reporting and referral mechanisms, and ethical information-sharing guidelines that ensure safety, confidentiality and privacy. They must also be gender-sensitive and responsive to the needs of children.

24. Much guidance has been developed on ensuring better cooperation and coordination for services, by practitioners and researchers, including by non-governmental organizations[29] or the "Guidelines for gender-based violence interventions in humanitarian settings" of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.[30] Despite such guidance, many critical gaps remain in the implementation of multisectoral services and responses, leaving many women and girls at risk of death, injury or further victimization. In particular, significant gaps remain in laws and policies, the provision, quality and accessibility of multisectoral services and responses and the ability to assess their effectiveness.

## V. Laws, policies, coordination and resources

25. Comprehensive laws, including those that criminalize violence against women and girls[31] and mandate the provision of coordinated multisectoral services and responses, form the foundation of sustainable responses. Of the responses provided by Member States, only a few clearly reported that they had mandates for the provision of multisectoral services and responses in legislation (Poland, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden). As outlined in the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women (A/61/122/Add.1 and Corr.1), comprehensive multisectoral services and responses must be sustained, supported and facilitated by strong dedicated and permanent institutional mechanisms. Implementation of such services should be accompanied by relevant legislation and/or policies that also provide for the establishment of appropriate and effective coordination mechanisms at all levels and include the necessary resources and funding for implementation.

26. A number of reporting States have established comprehensive coordination mechanisms for services and responses to violence against women and girls, primarily for domestic violence and/or sexual assault (Colombia, Estonia, Finland, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Paraguay, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain, the Sudan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). With the exception of Finland, Malta and Slovenia, however, it was not clear if such mechanisms were provided for in legislation. More commonly, the coordination mechanisms and the provision of services were specified through ministerial decrees (Djibouti, the Sudan) or through policy frameworks, including national action plans, strategies or platforms (Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Madagascar and

[28] More information available from www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/plans-and-strategies/women/action-plan-to-address-violence-against-women-and-children.

[29] See, for example, Women against Violence Europe, "Bridging gaps: from good intentions to good cooperation", available from www.wave-network.org/start.asp?ID=289&b=15.

[30] Available from http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/GBV%20Guidelines%20(English).pdf.

[31] See the *Handbook for Legislation on Violence against Women* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.IV.2) and General Assembly resolution 65/228.

Sri Lanka). Little information was provided by States in relation to the funding arrangements for the provision of these services, with the exception data shared by Austria, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Mexico, Spain and Sweden. Denmark reported the recent establishment of a fund for victims, which collects money from the perpetrators that can then be used to assist the victims. Austria reported that a law authorizes public financing for the national centres for protection from violence.

## VI. Provision of multisectoral services and responses

27. Multisectoral services and responses in many countries, when available, are generally limited to those required in the immediate aftermath of violence and sometimes are only provided in urban areas. Submissions provided by Member States referred to the presence of a range of multisectoral services and responses required immediately after the violence has occurred, including all or a combination of free 24-hour hotlines, police responses, protection orders, access to legal aid, shelters, health care and psychosocial counselling (Austria, Colombia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Jordan, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mexico, Paraguay, Poland, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). Some States specifically mentioned services for children and/or girls (Hungary, Mauritius, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, Spain and Sri Lanka) or initiatives aimed at children who witness violence (Sweden). Mauritius reported that child victims of abuse and their families are offered psychological counselling and legal advice from six family support bureaus.

28. The level of coordination of services and responses varies. Some States clearly reported the provision of all necessary services in a coordinated and integrated way (Argentina, Austria, Colombia, Madagascar, Mexico and Spain). In Madagascar, regional bodies seek to ensure that services and responses work together through the creation of networks, and Austria and Finland are piloting the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference model, which originated in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and involves all relevant institutions meeting to discuss protection options for women at high risk of violence. Human rights treaty bodies, including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, have also expressed concern that the level of coordination remains inadequate.[32] In emergency settings, the disruption and destruction of services, coupled with the arrival of humanitarian actors providing services to address gender-based violence, adds another layer of complexity and urgency to the coordination of multisectoral services and responses.

29. There are still critical gaps in the strategies and plans of many States in responding to violence against women and girls. Several Member States reported on their responses to domestic or family violence and sexual assault. Some States identified responses and/or laws available or being developed for other forms of violence such as trafficking (Argentina, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Kuwait, Mexico, Paraguay, Qatar, Sri Lanka and Switzerland), "honour-related" violence (Sweden), female genital mutilations (Austria, Djibouti and Italy), forced and early marriage (Austria, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern

[32] See concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, available from www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/sessions.htm.

Ireland). Mexico reported a specific programme focused on femicide. Only Colombia, Paraguay and Slovenia reported specific responses to violence against women in the workplace. In its resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work, adopted at its ninety-eighth session, the International Labour Conference described gender-based violence as a critical and major global challenge to the goal of equity between women and men.

30. The inclusion of police and broader justice responses is critical in protecting victims/survivors and holding the perpetrators to account. While many Member States reported the provision of court-issued protection orders,[33] and some have even introduced short-term exclusion orders issued directly by the police (Austria, Hungary, Slovenia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), only a few States reported other specific responses provided by police and/or the justice sector (Colombia, Estonia, Finland, Mauritius, Mexico, Paraguay, Sri Lanka and the Sudan).

31. There are some examples of promising practices. Paraguay has established six police units throughout the country with officers specially trained to respond to violence against women. In Japan, once the court issues a protection order, police contact the victim to provide information on what to do if the order is breached and contact the respondent to ensure observance of the order. Other examples include: centres for justice in Mexico, which provide a multi-agency response to victims/survivors of violence and their families; centres established for victims of sexual and intra-familial violence in Colombia; and in Estonia, centres where police and victim support organizations are co-located. Many post-conflict countries have seen the establishment of special units within the police devoted to addressing this type of violence, the development and implementation of specific standard operating procedures, and community policing activities based on building trust and collaboration between the police force and women. The provision of effective police and justice responses needs to be strengthened to ensure access to justice and to end impunity.

32. Long-term assistance is necessary to ensure the full recovery of women and girls, as well as to reduce the risks of re-victimization. Such assistance includes employment assistance, access to long-term housing, social reintegration and reintegration into education for girls. An example of good practice in long-term support for women who have been the victims of violence was recently introduced in Australia, where some workplaces have introduced domestic violence entitlements in industrial awards and agreements, including access to paid family violence leave of up to 20 days a year.[34] Another good practice by States in relation to long-term support and recovery is the provision of reparations beyond those which provide restitution, compensation, rehabilitation and reintegration, but are transformative in nature, and address the structural and root causes of discrimination and inequality underlying violence against women and girls, as reported by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (A/HRC/14/22). Reports on the rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and

[33] Although yet to come into force, an example of good practice regarding regional cooperation for protection is the European Protection Order endorsed by the European Parliament in 2011. Information available from www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20111213IPR33945/html/Parliament-endorses-EU-wide-protection-for-crime-victims.

[34] More information available from www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/resources#workplace.

post-conflict societies (including the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/634)) have emphasized the need to support national reparations programmes, which have particular importance for women and girls in post-conflict situations. In relation to longer-term support for women and girls, very few States identified the provision of such services (Austria, Italy, Spain and Sweden). The provision of effective long-term services for victims continues to be a critical gap for all countries.

## VII. Ensuring the quality of multisectoral services and responses

33. The manner in which services and responses are established, the way in which professionals respond, and the mechanisms in place to ensure safety, security and confidentiality for victims/survivors are important for building the confidence of women and girls in accessing and using the services. Developing standards is a means of ensuring quality service provision, as such standards, in the context of violence against women and girls, provide guidance on the establishment of multisectoral services and responses and the development of standards for service delivery for the professionals involved to ensure the needs of victims/survivors are met, especially in the immediate aftermath of violence. The Council of Europe has introduced very specific service standards for multisectoral services and responses, including the different types of services that should exist in order to form a complete system of support and the minimum standards for the development of such services.[35]

34. The World Health Organization (WHO) is currently in the process of developing guidelines and standards for health-care services for victims of intimate partner and sexual violence.[36] Some countries have developed processes to try and regulate the quality and provision of service (Finland, Italy and Sweden). Although there are some examples of good practice, there are no globally agreed or accepted standards for coordinated multisectoral services and response. The implementation of such standards, which would have to be adapted to particular contexts, would ensure the quality of response to women and girls, regardless of where they live. While many multisectoral services and responses are provided by non-governmental agencies, the obligation and responsibility for such services, including the standard of service, still lies with Member States.

## VIII. Access to multisectoral services and responses for all women and girls

35. There is evidence to suggest that there are obstacles preventing many women and girls from accessing multisectoral services and responses, such as: inadequate geographical coverage; lack of knowledge by women and girls of services available; provision of service that is inadequate or tailored for specific groups of women and girls; lack of access for children; victims' fear of reporting due to the stigma of victimization; or the cost of services if they are paid for by the victim/survivor. In

[35] Council of Europe, "Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services", available from www.coe.int/equality.

[36] More information available from www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/violence/prevention/en/index.html.

conflict-affected settings, services are often temporarily suspended, destroyed or displaced, or made inaccessible and out of reach for security reasons, and people fleeing violence are less likely to be able to access those services that are functioning.

36. Mapping exercises have been undertaken in some countries to identify gaps in services and responses. In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the End Violence against Women Coalition have produced two reports on the gaps in service provision in that country.[37] In Nepal, a preliminary mapping of gender-based violence interventions has been undertaken to help inform future service delivery.[38] Both exercises are examples of good practice to ensure adequate coverage of multisectoral services and responses, particularly in rural areas where such support is often absent or inadequate. Italy provided the most detailed information on geographical coverage, including that it funded 165 anti-violence centres (72 of which were shelters). Colombia reported extending accessibility to services through the provision of 63 units of comprehensive care for victims. Some States reported having only one shelter (Jordan, Malta and Paraguay) and none of the reporting States stated whether a service mapping exercise was conducted to identify gaps in service provision.

37. An important part of ensuring access is through awareness-raising and the promotion of available services and responses. Many Member States referred to increasing awareness of services and responses through the provision and promotion of information, including toll-free numbers, media campaigns and other awareness-raising methods (Austria, Colombia, Djibouti, Italy, Spain, Slovenia and Sri Lanka). Djibouti reported the development of a "judicial guide" for victims, which assisted women in understanding how to bring a complaint and the functioning of the justice system, as well as of a specific service that provides legal information. Argentina and Spain reported the development of online databases that include detailed information on resources and services at the national level. Mexico referred to an initiative in schools to raise awareness of gender-based violence, with the express aim of early detection and encouraging reporting.

38. As highlighted in the in-depth study on violence against women, there are several factors that influence what forms of violence women and girls suffer and how they experience it, including their race, ethnicity, caste, class, migrant or refugee status, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or HIV status. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences recently highlighted that the lack of recognition of inequality among different groups of women leads to particular vulnerability, among certain groups of women, to violence being obscured and, more often than not, the women whose rights are protected are not those at the greatest risk of gender-based violence (see A/HRC/17/26). This also pertains to certain groups of women in specific or country contexts, who are subject to violence owing to their position or status in society, for example, widows.

39. In a specific report on women with disabilities (A/67/227), the Special Rapporteur stated that women with disabilities experience many of the same forms of violence that other women experience, but highlighted additional barriers they

[37] More information available from www.equalityhumanrights.com/key-projects/map-of-gaps/.

[38] The Asia Foundation, "Nepal: preliminary mapping of gender-based violence", 2010.

face in accessing justice and multisectoral services and responses to escape the violence. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) also highlighted that women and girls with disabilities are at a greater risk of violence and that the legislation that exists on violence against women and girls often does not recognize the range of domestic or family settings in which women with disabilities may live and the variety of possible perpetrators in such contexts, including caregivers (see A/HRC/20/5 and Corr.1). The report concluded that programmes to prevent violence against women and ensure access to justice, protection measures and legal, social and health-care services should be developed and implemented to include accessibility for women and girls with disabilities. Similarly, it is important that such services and responses are accessible to other groups of women, including indigenous women and girls (see E/C.19/2012/6) and women with HIV.[39]

40. Some States identified specific initiatives aimed at improving access for rural women and some groups of women who suffer multiple forms of discrimination (Argentina, Austria, Madagascar, Mexico, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) through awareness-raising and the provision of specific services, including mobile outreach in rural areas. For example, Madagascar seeks to protect women migrant workers from violence through the development of an agreement with the receiving country to protect their rights and repatriate citizen migrant workers who have been victims of violence. In Argentina, free legal advice is provided to indigenous women and other vulnerable groups in more remote areas through mobile outreach services. Mexico has specialized centres for indigenous women who are victims of violence and 38 mobile service centres have been created to respond to women and girls in remote areas. In addition, the country also has trained and certified interpreters in indigenous languages.

41. Paraguay has established four regional centres to respond to violence against women, including in one region where there is a concentration of indigenous communities. Spain is considering measures to make a telephone hotline more accessible for women with audio impairment and provides assistance to migrant women through the provision of temporary residence. The Republic of Korea, through special measures aimed at protecting women with disabilities, has established five protection facilities for disabled people affected by domestic and sexual violence. Denmark reported that one shelter was dedicated to women from minority groups and that many shelters have facilities for women with children and women with disabilities, as well as accepting children up to the age of 14. The practice of establishing mobile courts and mobile health clinics specifically devoted to addressing violence against women and girls is being increasingly used in post-conflict settings, owing to the dysfunction of health and justice institutions.

42. Few responses from States specifically mentioned access for children to shelters, which is critical for many women to feel confident in accessing such services. Finland reported on specific initiatives aimed at the safety of older people. Spain was the only State to report on specific services and responses for adolescent girls, an important group with particular developmental needs not often provided by available services. Access to information, education and to services on sexual and

[39] Studies from several countries have found that HIV-positive women report higher rates of intimate partner violence. More information available from www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(10)60548-X/fulltext.

reproductive health is a critical component to enable all individuals, including adolescents, to protect their health and exercise their reproductive rights.

43. Building the capacity of professionals who deliver service and response to victims/survivors is necessary to ensure access by all women and girls. Nearly all States referred to capacity-building for some or all service providers to respond to all women and girls. Many States referred to the provision of handbooks or manuals and training for prosecutors, police and judges, as well as reporting on many other training activities for professionals from other sectors. Many States referred to specific training for all professionals, particularly in relation to family or domestic violence and sexual violence. Few Member States specifically reported capacity-building for professionals to adequately respond to women and girls suffering multiple forms of discrimination, except for Mexico, where the State reported working with justice professionals to improve access to justice for indigenous women.

44. Human rights treaty bodies have also urged States to provide geographically distributed and adequately resourced support services to victims, and to ensure that all women victims of violence, including women from rural areas and vulnerable groups, have full access to such services.

## IX. Assessing the effectiveness of multisectoral services and responses

45. An important component of coordinated multisectoral services and responses is the ability to assess their effectiveness through ongoing monitoring, evaluation and data, to ensure they are achieving their goals.

### Monitoring and evaluation

46. Monitoring is an ongoing review of practices that should be undertaken by the relevant coordinating mechanism. Evaluation is a more in-depth and formal analysis of the impact and effectiveness of the system response (assessing both the direct benefits to the victim/survivor and the way in which services are working together) that should be undertaken, preferably by an independent body, using specific methodologies and during specific points in time during the lifespan of an initiative. Even though coordinated multisectoral responses have been implemented in various forms, albeit specific to local contexts, for almost three decades, comprehensive evaluations of such responses are still relatively limited. While the success of such responses can be understood intuitively in terms of reducing the impact on the victims/survivors when reporting, if more evaluations were conducted with consistent methodologies, there would be greater opportunity to identify common elements of success across all settings, thereby adding to wider knowledge on more effective responses.

47. Very limited information was provided in relation to evaluation and monitoring of programmes and policies to inform and strengthen future work. Sweden reported an evaluation of its national plan using the outcomes to inform ongoing work, and to build up knowledge and research. Austria reported two evaluations of the Protection Against Violence Act and another that assessed the impact of the violence protection centres for women and children. Argentina's

National Observatory on Violence against Women monitors and collects data to inform policy and strategies to eradicate and prevent violence.

**Prevalence data and indicators**

48. As well as developing appropriate methodologies for evaluation, a critical part of an effective evaluation and/or monitoring process is identifying the appropriate indicators and the data that should be collected to support such processes. Prevalence data (the estimated percentage of women experiencing violence) is critical to understanding the extent and depth of the problem of violence against women, in order to inform the development of policies and strategies and their related costs and to see if such strategies are working. Increasingly, more States have collected prevalence data through domestic household surveys, other dedicated surveys or through WHO. In most cases, the prevalence surveys are limited to sexual and physical violence committed by partners and non-partners. Since the release, in 2006, of the study on violence against children,[14] countries such as Swaziland and the United Republic of Tanzania have also completed prevalence studies of violence against children, some focusing specifically on violence against girls.

49. While it is unlikely that that all surveys are conducted in the same way across all States, the indicators on violence against women developed by the Friends of the Chair of the Statistical Commission (see E/CN.3/2009/13) and the accompanying guidelines for conducting such surveys currently being developed by the United Nations Statistics Division (see E/CN.3/2011/5) will assist in promoting consistency and comparability of data. The guidelines will be important for ensuring that any research conducted with women who have been abused, or those at risk of being abused, is done in line with relevant ethical considerations such as privacy and confidentiality or ensuring participant safety.[40]

50. Some Member States reported collecting prevalence data (Italy, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico and the Republic of Korea) but the indicators against which data was collected was unclear. Jordan referred to its national system for gender statistics and indicators but there was no reference to data or indicators on violence against women and girls. Sweden conducts an annual survey on victimization, a segment of which includes family, intimate partner and honour-related violence.

**Individual incidents and system responses**

51. It is important to measure the impact that services and responses are having on women's and girls' lives and their safety by looking at the system's response to individual incidents. This requires the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. Some relevant data may be drawn from the prevalence surveys in many countries, which in some instances record women's "help-seeking" behaviours. This predominantly includes access to administrative data from police, the justice system and all other multisectoral services providing responses to women and girls.

52. Qualitative data can be sought from survivors who should be an important part of any evaluation of effectiveness. Their feedback should also be included in the

[40] Mary Ellsberg and Lori Heise, "Researching violence against women: a practical guide for researchers and activists", World Health Organization and Program for Appropriate Technology in Health, Washington, D.C., 2005.

policy formulation process.[40] In humanitarian settings, the inter-agency Gender-Based Violence Information Management System[41] led by the International Rescue Committee, the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund and WHO allows for the collection, management and sharing of data on violence against women and girls that better inform the humanitarian response to such violence.

53. With the exception of Argentina, few States referred to a systemic collection of data (Austria, Finland and Sri Lanka) through multiple sources. Sri Lanka reported that the data was used to develop prevention and/or protection measures or used in measuring the effectiveness of the multisectoral services and responses. The Sudan identified the lack of data and its analysis as a weakness in its response to violence against women and girls. No State reported the development of specific indicators for assessing system effectiveness.

54. As with prevalence data, there is benefit in having a degree of consistency in what is being measured and collected at the national level to support information-sharing on effective practices. There has been little work done on developing indicators to measure the effectiveness of system responses for protection or the prevention of re-victimization, although the Special Rapporteur for violence against women, its causes and consequences proposed such indicators in 2008 (see A/HRC/7/6). While it may not be possible to develop a comprehensive set of indicators to measure the impact of coordinated multisectoral responses and services, it may be possible to reach consensus on such broad indicators as those proposed by the Special Rapporteur, which include increased levels of reporting, attrition from the system, especially the criminal justice system, and whether or not services are working together effectively.

## X. Coordination within the United Nations system

55. The former Task Force on Violence against Women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (currently known as the Standing Committee on Violence against Women) has enhanced the timely exchange of information, coordination and collaboration among United Nations entities through an initiative seeking to capture the results and lessons learned from the joint programming carried out in 10 countries.[42] Individual and joint programming assistance provided by several United Nations entities continues to support the development of comprehensive multisectoral services and responses, such as the development of the "Delivering as one" approach in Rwanda.[42] The United Nations coordinates matters related to conflict-related sexual violence through United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, and matters related to all forms of violence against women and girls in emergency settings via the gender-based violence area of responsibility within the Global Protection Cluster.

56. The Secretary-General's campaign "UNiTE to End Violence Against Women" continues to coordinate inter-agency cooperation on many aspects of responding to violence against women, including by advocating for amendments in laws and

[41] More information available from www.gbvims.org.

[42] More information available from www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2011/VAWJointProgrammingCompendium-1.pdf.

polic es, establishing and delivering multisectoral services and responses and devel oping consistent and integrated data systems to inform the development of polic / and responses. The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women also continues to support the development of comprehensive multisectoral services and responses through funding provided to many countries for the development of such services and for ensuring access for all women. Its call for proposals for 2012 includes a focus on the implementation of national and local laws, policies and action plans for addressing violence against women and violence against adolescent and young girls. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) prioritizes ending violence against women in its strategy 2011-2015.

# XI. Conclusions and recommendations

57. **The conclusions and recommendations draw on the consensus of the UN-Women Stakeholders' Forum on preventing and eliminating violence against women, held in New York on 13 and 14 December 2012, at which Ministers from Member States, permanent representatives to the United Nations, civil society organizations and leaders of the United Nations system emphasized the commitment to normative strengthening and the effective and accelerated implementation and enforcement of the response to, and prevention of, violence against women and girls. The foundation for the development and delivery of effective services and responses for violence against women and girls has been well established. It is now understood that the response to violence against women and girls must be anchored in a human rights framework, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (as recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in its general recommendation No. 19), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action. It must recognize the power imbalances and gender inequality between perpetrators and victims/survivors, and hold perpetrators accountable. Such services and responses should be mandated in comprehensive legal and policy frameworks. They should be multisectoral and coordinated in order to respond to the multidimensional impacts of violence. All women and their accompanying children, as well as girls who are subject to violence, should have access to such services and responses, including equal access to justice. Multisectoral services and responses should also take into consideration the needs of particular groups of women and girls, especially those who face multiple forms of discrimination and should maintain the confidentiality and privacy of all victims/survivors.**

58. **While there has been some progress in this area, implementation has been slow and uneven across countries, including inconsistency in the quality of service provision. Even in high-income countries, the availability and affordability of, and access to, services and support is insufficient and/or inappropriate, especially for those services that ensure women's long-term recovery and reintegration into society.**

59. **With regard to the following areas, the Commission on the Status of Women, at its fifty-seventh session, may wish to call on Governments and other stakeholders to:**

*Global legal and policy framework*

**(a) Work towards the universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, withdraw all reservations to the Convention and ratify or accede to its Optional Protocol;**

**(b) Continue to strengthen norms and standards at the global, regional and national levels and consider the development of a global implementation plan;**

**(c) Strengthen accountability mechanisms, including through the coverage of violence against women in comprehensive reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;**

**(d) Consider the linkages between gender equality, women's empowerment and violence against women and girls in future development frameworks;**

*Laws, policies, coordination and resources*

**(e) Ensure that national legislation and policies on violence against women reflect international human rights standards;**

**(f) Develop comprehensive national policies and action plans that clearly outline benchmarks for progressively achieving comprehensive multisectoral responses and services for violence against women and girls and include the establishment of baselines in order to measure such achievement;**

**(g) Undertake costing exercises to determine adequate budget allocations for the provision of multisectoral services and responses and mandate the ongoing provision of adequate resources in law and policy;**

**(h) Authorize the provision of multisectoral services and responses in law and policy;**

**(i) Develop and provide for the necessary coordination mechanisms in law and policy;**

*Provision of multisectoral services and responses*

**(j) Identify and provide the full range of multisectoral services and responses to respond to all forms of violence against all women and girls, including police and justice responses, shelters, legal aid, health-care services (including those for sexual and reproductive health) and psychosocial counselling and support, 24-hour hotline services, services for accompanying children at shelters, long-term economic and employment assistance and social reintegration support;**

**(k) Ensure that women and girls enjoy their human rights, including their reproductive rights;**

**(l) Ensure the availability of multisectoral services and responses in conflict, post-conflict, transitional and other humanitarian settings and coordination among all actors, including humanitarian relief agencies and peacekeepers;**

**(m) Establish multisectoral services and responses through comprehensive referral mechanisms;**

**(n) Develop and implement information-sharing guidelines that are underpinned by ethical principles;**

**(o) Progressively work towards the inclusion of long-term support for women and their accompanying children, as well as girls subjected to violence, in order to ensure their recovery and reintegration into society such as by providing access to permanent housing and employment opportunities to prevent further re-victimization;**

**(p) Strengthen coordination in, and accountability of, the United Nations system to support States in the development of effective multisectoral services and responses;**

*Ensuring quality of services and responses*

**(q) Work towards developing a set of global standards for multisectoral services and responses to ensure the necessary quality of services and responses, beginning with those required in the immediate aftermath of violence and progressively including those required for longer-term recovery;**

*Access to multisectoral services and responses*

**(r) Strengthen and expand the means for promoting the availability of multisectoral services and responses and to inform survivors of their legal rights to access such services;**

**(s) Continue to develop and expand the capacity of all professionals working in multisectoral services and responses to ensure they respond appropriately to all women and girls accessing services;**

**(t) Undertake mapping exercises to identify gaps in the provision of multisectoral services and responses;**

**(u) Provide the full range of multisectoral services and responses to rural women, either through permanent placement of services or through mobile outreach services;**

**(v) Develop and implement multisectoral services and responses that are culturally sensitive and accessible for specific groups of women, including indigenous and migrant women;**

**(w) Ensure services and responses are accessible for women and girls with specific needs, such as women and girls with disabilities and women and girls living with HIV;**

**(x) Provide services and responses that take into account the needs of young and adolescent girls and of children who accompany their mothers or female caregivers when accessing services and responses;**

*Assessing effectiveness*

**(y) Monitor and independently evaluate the provision of multisectoral services and responses to ensure that they are effective in meeting the safety, recovery, and reintegration needs of women and girls;**

**(z) Collect data disaggregated by age, sex and disability and other relevant factors to support the design of multisectoral services and responses, as well as the monitoring and evaluation processes;**

**(aa) Collect data on access to multisectoral services and responses by women and girls who suffer multiple and intersecting forms of violence;**

**(bb) Integrate the prevalence indicators for violence against women and girls endorsed by the Statistical Commission into national survey instruments and ensure that these surveys are conducted on a regular basis;**

**(cc) Build on the work of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences in developing consistent indicators for assessing the effectiveness of coordinated multisectoral services and responses.**

United Nations E/CN.6/2013/4

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
20 December 2012

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-seventh session**
4-15 March 2013
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

## Prevention of violence against women and girls

### Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report examines strategies to prevent violence against women and girls. The report concludes with a number of recommendations for future action for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women.

* E/CN.6/2013/1.

12-65973 (E) 210113

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# I. Introduction

1. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15, the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-seventh session will consider as its priority theme "The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls". The present report covers the prevention of violence against women and girls.[1]

2. The report draws on the findings of the expert group meeting on the prevention of violence against women and girls, organized by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), which was held in Bangkok from 17 to 20 September 2012.[2] It also draws on the consensus of the stakeholders forum on preventing and eliminating violence against women,[3] held at United Nations Headquarters on 13 and 14 December 2012, at which Ministers of the States Members of the United Nations, permanent representatives to the United Nations, civil society organizations and United Nations system leaders emphasized the commitment to normative strengthening and the effective and accelerated implementation and enforcement of the response to, and prevention of, violence against women and girls. It incorporates analysis and examples provided by Member States[4] and concludes with recommendations for the Commission to consider.

# II. Global and regional legal and policy frameworks

3. According to the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (General Assembly resolution 48/104), violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life, and whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or private persons. Violence against women and girls has been recognized as a form of discrimination and a human rights violation. States have obligations to take appropriate measures to prevent, prosecute all forms of, and protect women and girls from violence.

4. The important role of efforts aimed at the prevention of such violence has been stressed in various legal and policy instruments developed at the global and regional levels. The responsibility of States to address social and cultural patterns of conduct leading to discrimination and stereotyped roles for women and men, lying at the

[1] See also E/CN.6/2013/3, on multi-sectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence.

[2] The report of the meeting is available from http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Report-of-the-EGM-on-Prevention-of-Violence-against-Women-and-Girls.pdf.

[3] The report of the forum is available from http://www.unwomen.org/2012/12/stakeholders-forum-concludes-with-a-call-to-governments-to-commit-to-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls/.

[4] Argentina, Austria, Colombia, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Paraguay, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

core of prevention, is outlined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women explicitly recognizes such violence as a form of discrimination in its General Recommendation No. 19 and has further stressed in its concluding observations to States the importance of prevention to address its root causes. Articles 19 and 34 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child also require that States undertake to protect girls from violence, including through measures to prevent such violence.

5. The Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, identified violence against women as one of the 12 critical areas of concern that required urgent action to achieve the goals of equality, development and peace, and called for its prevention. The call for such action was reiterated during its five-year review of the Platform for Action (see General Assembly resolution S-23/3, annex, para. 69).

6. The General Assembly has consistently stressed the importance of the prevention of violence against women in a number of its resolutions, including on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women[5] and on strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women (see resolution 65/228).

7. The Human Rights Council underscored the need for the prevention of such violence, including through its resolutions,[6] the recommendations of the universal periodic review, and through its special procedures. The Commission on the Status of Women addressed the topic at its forty-seventh session, held in 2003, and in the agreed conclusions of its forty-second session, held in 1998, and its fifty-first session, held in 2007 (see E/2007/27). Prevention of such violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations is the first goal of the 10-year United Nations strategic results framework on women, peace and security (see S/2011/598).

8. Many regional instruments have also stressed the important role of prevention, including the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003); the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999); the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (1994); the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (2011); and the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (2010).

## III. Scope and current situation

9. According to UN-Women, country data reveals that as many as 7 in 10 women in the world report having experienced physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime. Statistics indicate that violence against women and girls is a universal phenomenon, irrespective of income, class and culture. Forms and manifestations of violence against women and girls include intimate partner violence, early and forced marriage, forced pregnancy, honour crimes, female

[5] See General Assembly resolutions 61/143, 62/133, 63/155, 64/137 and 65/187.

[6] See, for example, Human Rights Council resolutions 14/12 and 17/11.

genital mutilation, femicide, non-partner sexual violence, sexual harassment in the workplace, other institutions and in public spaces, trafficking, violence condoned by the State and violence against women in conflict situations (see A/61/122/Add.1 and Corr.1). Particular groups of women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination are exposed to increased risk of violence (see A/HRC/17/26).

10. Violence against women and girls has devastating effects on individuals, communities and societies, and bears significant economic and social costs for countries. Cost analysis of violence against women, carried out in several areas, including Australia, Canada, England and Wales, and the United States of America, reveals that the annual cost of such violence may vary from US$ 1.16 billion to $32.9 billion, covering a variety of costs, ranging from responses to survivors to those related to lost productivity (see A/HRC/17/26).

11. The current economic crises have resulted in increased unemployment and poverty, and cutbacks in social spending on health and education, rendering women more vulnerable to exploitation and violence, and with a negative impact on overall gender equality.[7] Other situations, such as armed conflict and natural disasters, have also increased the vulnerability of women and girls.

12. States have a duty to act with due diligence to prevent violence committed by both public and private actors. Violence against women and girls is a complex phenomenon and multifaceted strategies are required for preventing it.[8] A systematic and holistic approach is required to address such violence, including legislative and policy measures, protection, prosecution and punishment of offenders, just and prompt reparations for survivors, prevention, and data collection and research.[8]

13. Considerable progress has been made, mainly on improving justice and service responses for survivors, but there has been relatively little work done towards fulfilling the obligation of States in respect of prevention (see E/CN.4/2006/61 and A/HRC/17/23). Response interventions, while essential, can only have limited impact on reducing violence. Violence against women and girls can be prevented and reduced, with political will, well-funded strategies, and accountability mechanisms to ensure their implementation (see A/61/299).

14. Despite promising practices, prevention remains a relatively new area, without a critical mass of expertise and interventions. The approach to prevention has been fragmented through isolated activities, such as sensitization and educational programmes. Recent evidence shows that such activities have to be mutually reinforcing in order to have a sustained effect on addressing the root causes of violence against women and girls.

15. Prevention requires identifying the underlying causes of violence against women and girls and addressing the factors that increase the risk of violence. The causes of such violence have been examined from various theoretical perspectives, and in diverse contexts, concluding that no single cause adequately accounts for violence against women. Such violence cannot be attributed solely to individual factors, socioeconomic conditions or relationship factors without considering that it

[7] Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, *Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on Women, Rights and Gender Equality* (Geneva, 2012).

[8] World Health Organization, *Preventing Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence against Women: Taking Action and Generating Evidence* (Geneva, 2010).

is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between women and men and systemic gender-based discrimination (see A/61/299).

16. Public health approaches have developed an "ecological model" to further identify such risk factors at different levels and explain their interplay.[9] At the individual level, the factors include social and economic status, individual behaviours and histories of exposure to violence. At the family level, they include male control of wealth and decision-making within the family, conflict within the parent/child relationship and disparities in social and economic status. Other factors include community attitudes that tolerate such violence; inadequate laws, policies for the prevention and punishment of violence or their inadequate implementation, as well as socioeconomic structures that support gender inequality.

17. In order to effectively address the root causes of violence against women and girls it is essential to develop evidence-based and multi-sectoral strategies. The current report will mainly focus on identifying strategies that address all forms of gender-based violence, perpetrated by both State and non-State actors, against all groups of women, since some risk factors are shared across all forms of such violence and for all groups of women. Particular risk factors, however, may apply for specific forms of violence and groups of women and girls for which tailored strategies have to be considered. For instance, women living with HIV are exposed to increased risk of violence, if they reveal their status, while violence against women and power inequalities in relationships can increase the risk of HIV infection.[10]

18. Strategies for prevention of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, in conflict-affected settings, should aim at ending impunity and promoting zero tolerance for such violence. Strategies in these settings share commonalities with strategies applied in stable settings, including in the areas of community mobilization, changing social norms and economic empowerment of women and girls. Limited research and practice regarding effective prevention of such violence in these settings remains a challenge. Efforts may include engaging with State and non-State armed actors to comply with international law, as well as enhancing their accountability, including through the enforcement of codes of conduct. Prevention approaches by peacekeeping missions include the threat of sanctions for perpetrators, conducting training of armed actors and consultations with women and girls. Other prevention strategies include disarmament and reintegration. Such efforts are also often fragmented, underresourced and lack impact evaluation.

19. Although the focus of the current report is on the prevention of violence before it occurs, it has to be stressed that a holistic approach, spanning the continuum of prevention and multisectorial responses, is required to effectively address violence against women and girls. Prevention of and responses to such violence are interlinked. Prevention and awareness-raising activities often result in increased reporting and demand from survivors for support. Services should be therefore in place to ensure their support and protection. On the other hand, effective responses

[9] Lori Heisse, "What works to prevent partner violence: an evidence overview", working paper on study supported by the Department for International Development, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, December 2011.

[10] Rachel Jewkes and others, "Intimate partner violence, relationship power inequity, and incidence of HIV infection in young women in South Africa: a cohort study", *The Lancet*, vol. 376 (July 2010), pp. 41-48.

and services prevent violence from reoccurring and convey that such violence is not tolerated.

## IV. National legal, policy frameworks and resources

20. Legal and policy frameworks provide the foundation for a coordinated, holistic and effective approach to addressing violence against women and girls. The allocation of adequate resources to ensure their effective implementation is critical.

21. A comprehensive legal framework that not only prohibits and criminalizes violence against women and girls but also provides for prevention measures, support to and protection of survivors is crucial. States have initially focused their legislative responses on criminalizing such violence, with indications that rates of violence against women and girls can be reduced in settings that hold perpetrators accountable.

22. Several gaps have been identified, however, in legislation and its enforcement. For instance, various forms of such violence, such as marital rape, have not been criminalized in many countries, while loopholes in laws, discriminatory attitudes of officials and procedural barriers for access to justice have contributed to low rates of reporting and conviction. In its report entitled "Progress of the world's women: in pursuit of justice (2011-2012)", UN-Women indicates that complementary measures, including capacity-building of law enforcement officials, and the establishment of specialized police units and courts, are therefore required.

23. States have been increasingly adopting more comprehensive laws which also include prevention measures.[11] Such comprehensive laws were adopted in Colombia, Italy and the Republic of Korea, which also mandated educational programmes and awareness-raising.

24. Laws and policies should also address the socioeconomic inequalities between men and women (see A/HRC/20/25/Add.1 and A/HRC/11/6) and protect the human rights of women and girls, including their sexual and reproductive rights. Reforms should ensure that the economic, legal, social and political empowerment of women and girls contributes to the shifting of norms that condone such violence. Evidence shows that rates of such violence are higher in settings where economic and social gender inequality prevails.[12] These interlinkages between gender equality, women's empowerment and violence against women and girls should be considered in future development frameworks.

25. Legal and policy reforms are essential to ensure the equal rights of women and girls to education, social security, property, employment, political participation and an adequate standard of living. They should also incorporate special measures for women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination (see A/HRC/20/28). To that end, Jordan and Slovenia reported on the adoption and/or reforms of laws and policies to address gender-based discrimination. Kuwait and Sri Lanka took measures to increase women's political participation, and Sweden took measures to

[11] *Handbook for Legislation on Violence Against Women*, 2010 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.IV.2); see also E/CN.15/2012/13.

[12] United Nations Development Fund for Women, "Investing in gender equality: ending violence against women" (2010).

increase women's access to labour markets and financial resources, with a focus on rural and immigrant women. Despite progress,[13] discriminatory laws and practices continue to exist, also in relation to women's rights to marriage and divorce, inheritance and decent work.[14]

26. Addressing women's economic inequality is of particular importance. Evidence is emerging of the effectiveness of microfinance programmes in reducing violence against women and girls in the long term. Such programmes are particularly effective when they promote gender equality and engage men, boys and the broader communities. In South Africa, for example, the evaluated Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS and Gender Equity study demonstrated a 55 per cent reduction in intimate partner violence over a two-year period.[14] Nevertheless, such programmes should consider, prior to implementation, the adverse effects that may occur in the short term, including an increased risk of violence against women and girls, as traditional gender roles are challenged.

27. Women's empowerment and participation in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and overall decision-making in post-conflict contexts is crucial in preventing violence against women and girls. Women's meaningful participation in peace talks, peacekeeping missions, the security sector, transitional justice processes, peacebuilding institutions and decision-making bodies is crucial in creating a safer post-conflict environment.

28. National action plans and interventions that specifically address violence against women and girls are a critical component of a prevention strategy and provide the framework for the development and implementation of comprehensive and coordinated strategies. A review of such national action plans and policies indicated that most policies were limited to responding to violence, while those that contained specific prevention activities mainly focused on awareness-raising and school-based programmes.[15] Many reporting States, including Denmark, Malta, Mauritius and Slovenia have adopted national action plans to address violence against women in general, or in specific forms, similarly including prevention measures, such as awareness-raising.

29. In many conflict and post-conflict settings, Governments have adopted national action plans on gender-based violence or on women, peace and security more broadly, which include provisions to prevent violence against women and girls. In such settings, all actors should ensure that prevention of violence against women and girls is also integrated into broader policies that cover contingency and recovery phases.

30. Lack of adequate resources and coordination were identified by human rights treaty bodies as challenges for the implementation of national action plans and policies. In order to enhance such coordination, several States, such as Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Mauritius, Mexico, Poland, Spain, the Sudan, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, reported on the

[13] For a measurement of gender equality in different countries, see Social Institutions and Gender Index, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

[14] World Bank, *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development* (Washington, D.C., 2011).

[15] UN-Women, "Handbook for national action plans on violence against women" (2010); the plan of the government of Victoria (Australia) adopted a holistic approach to violence and its prevention; see similar conclusions contained in A/HRC/17/23.

establishment of coordination mechanisms, including task forces, dedicated units, working and interministerial groups or observatories. Only a few States referred to the allocation of resources for the implementation of prevention activities.

31. Since violence is associated with broader issues, it is important to ensure that violence against women and girls is also addressed in other policies and programmes related to public health, including sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS responses, alcohol and substance abuse, security and arms control, gender equality, education, employment and development.

32. To that end, Senegal, for instance, reported on the adoption of a national action plan to address poverty as a means to address violence against women and girls, while in Japan, Hungary and Slovenia, national action plans on gender equality also included measures to address such violence. In Finland, a national action plan was developed to address alcohol abuse, as a contributing factor of such violence. In the Republic of Korea, the impact of violence against women and girls on their overall empowerment was recognized by including measures to prevent such violence in the national action plan on women's empowerment, while Colombia included such measures in its national action plan on development.

33. Other policies and programmes on serious health issues, such as HIV/AIDS, closely associated with violence against women and girls, should include specific interventions to address violence against women and girls, and vice versa.[16]

## V. Social norms

34. Social and cultural patterns of conduct that lead to discrimination and stereotyped roles for women and men can legitimize, exacerbate or tolerate violence against women and girls. Addressing attitudes, behaviours and beliefs that condone such violence, and working with men and boys to promote gender equality and respectful relationships, should be essential components of prevention strategies.

### A. Awareness-raising campaigns

35. Awareness-raising and social marketing campaigns on the causes and consequences of violence are an important component of a comprehensive prevention strategy. Such campaigns enhance awareness of women's and girls' rights, available remedies and services for survivors, and convey the unacceptability of violence and discrimination against women and girls. Such campaigns need to be held regularly, be sustained, extended to remote areas and tailored to reach particular population groups. Almost all reporting States referred to having launched campaigns raising awareness on such violence, often targeting young men and women, or particular groups of women.

[16] Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, *Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic* (Geneva, 2010).

## B. Community mobilization

36. Social norms at the community level, expressed through practices and systems, for example, traditional justice systems, that may not always uphold the human rights of women and girls,[17] are particularly important. Community leaders and authorities can play an important role in promoting gender equality and non-violence, considering also their reach to marginalized parts of population. However, the main hindrances include the limited capacity of community officials and the lack of coordination between the national and local levels.

37. Community mobilization initiatives may include grass-roots campaigns, working with the media and engaging all levels of society, as examples of good practices.[18] Japan adopted such a participatory approach in community mobilization initiatives by involving women's and children's associations in programmes through international development cooperation.

38. Some promising practices of effectively changing norms and behaviours at the community level derive from programmes designed to discourage harmful practices such as female genital mutilation.[18] By linking human rights to local values and engaging religious and traditional leaders, communities have collectively declared abandonment of the practice. Apart from discouraging female genital mutilation, there is evidence that such programmes had a positive impact on other forms of violence against women and girls, such as early and forced marriage, and intimate partner violence.[19]

## C. Educational programmes

39. Programmes at all levels of formal education, and non-formal education settings, that promote gender equality and human rights, can have a significant impact on children and young people early in life. Many school-based programmes have demonstrated reductions in violence and improvements in educational achievement.[19]

40. Many of the programmes focus on developing respectful relationships, building non-violent communication skills and promoting gender equality, and often include components addressing physical violence, including corporal punishment and other forms of violent discipline, sexual violence and abuse, and bullying. In Sri Lanka, for instance, physical punishment of students is prohibited by law. Holistic school-based programmes that include training of teachers, parenting education and peer mediation proved to be the most effective.[19]

41. Several States, such as Austria, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Italy, Poland, Qatar, Slovenia, Spain, the Sudan and Sweden, reported on initiatives to promote

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[17] Sarah Bott, Andrew Morrison and Mary Ellsberg, "Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in middle and low-income countries: a global review and analysis", World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, No. 3618 (2005).

[18] Lori Michau, "Community mobilization: preventing partner violence by changing social norms", paper prepared for the expert group meeting on the prevention of violence against women and girls, held in Bangkok from 17 to 20 September 2012.

[19] UNICEF, Innocenti Research Centre, *The Dynamics of Social Change: Towards the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Five African Countries* (Florence, Italy, 2010).

safety and gender equality in schools, including sensitization of teachers, students and parents, as well as a revision of textbooks. In Finland, a positively evaluated programme addresses bullying in schools. In Argentina, Colombia and Mexico, educational programmes also include sexuality education.

42. Tertiary education can provide an opportunity to sensitize and train future professionals dealing with cases of violence against women and girls, including legal and health professionals, through specialized courses and curricula.

43. Nevertheless, many children and young people, especially the most marginalized ones, are outside the education system. It is important to ensure their enrolment in schools and to identify skills-building for healthy relationships, through community mobilization and other non-formal education programmes, including in sporting clubs and organizations.

## D. Men and boys

44. Men and boys can play a positive role in challenging gender stereotypes and shaping respectful, gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours. Research demonstrates that perpetration of sexual violence by men against women is often based on their perception of the inferiority of women,[20] while men with more gender-equitable attitudes are less likely to perpetrate sexual violence.[21]

45. According to an expert group meeting held in Brazil in 2004, men and boys need to be actively involved in interventions aimed at promoting positive constructions of masculinity, gender equality and equal sharing of responsibilities in different areas, including child-rearing and parenting, domestic work and caregiving. As a means of challenging gender stereotypes, Mauritius developed a programme to promote men's responsibilities within the family.

46. Several programmes have been developed to involve men and boys, including in bystander programmes, which encourage men to address attitudes that perpetuate negative gender stereotypes with their peers,[22] as well as in community mobilization and awareness-raising campaigns. Research findings increasingly show the positive impact of such programmes on men's gender-related attitudes and practices.[23] Women's concerns, rights and safety need, however, to remain at the centre of any initiatives.[24]

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[20] Partners for Prevention, "The change project: understanding gender, masculinities and power to prevent gender-based violence" — project overview and summary of preliminary research findings (2012).

[21] Barker and others, "Evolving men: initial results from the international men and gender equality survey" (Washington, D.C., International Center for Research on Women, and Rio De Janeiro, Instituto Promundo, January 2011).

[22] VicHealth, More than Ready: *Bystander Action to Prevent Violence against Women in the Victorian Community* (Carlton, Australia, 2012).

[23] Gary Barker and Dean Peacock, "Working with men and boys to promote gender equality: a review of the field and emerging approaches", paper prepared for the expert group meeting on the prevention of violence against women and girls, held in Bangkok from 17 to 20 September 2012.

[24] Lori Michau and Dipak Naker, *Preventing Gender-based Violence in the Horn, East and Southern Africa: A Regional Dialogue* (Raising Voices and United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2004).

# VI. Institutions and capacity development

47. Workplaces and justice, social welfare, health and educational institutions, for example, as well as the military and the police, have a key role in identifying, monitoring, responding to and preventing violence against women and girls. It is important to promote gender equality and non-tolerance of violence within these institutions and to strengthen their capacity to prevent and respond to the violence against women and girls that occurs within or outside their settings.

## A. Workplaces

48. Surveys have shown that women face high rates of violence in workplaces.[24] For example, 40 to 50 per cent of women in the European Union report some form of sexual harassment in the workplace, while in Asia-Pacific countries the rates range from 30 to 40 per cent of women workers.[24] The risk of such violence is increased for particular groups of women workers, for example, domestic and migrant workers.[25]

49. It is crucial to review policies and practices against discrimination and sexual harassment in order to develop reporting mechanisms and programmes on gender equality and human rights and carry out staff sensitization and peer education. Such initiatives should be tailored to the specific industry or workplace context and should be designed in consultation with Governments and employers' and workers' representatives. Sensitization efforts should be further integrated into existing human resources policies on occupational safety and health, and anti-discrimination strategies.

50. In order to protect women from sexual harassment in workplaces, Slovenia adopted an act obliging employers to take measures towards that end, and Malta carried out sensitization programmes for employees and employers and investigations of complaints. In Italy, special agreements were concluded between trade unions and private companies. Mexico reformed internal procedures to ensure that public sector workplaces respected gender equality.

## B. Role of particular institutions

51. Schools can be used as a key site for challenging gender stereotypes and promoting values of gender equality and human rights but they are also places within which girls can experience violence. Studies have showed the significant extent of sexual harassment and violence against girls in educational institutions, (see A/61/122/Add.1) and its impact on the education of girls as identified in programmes conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 34 countries in Africa. Key measures to address the negative impact have included policy reforms, building partnerships with community groups, gender-sensitive

[25] International Labour Organization, *Gender-based Violence in the World of Work: Overview and Selected Annotated Bibliography* (Geneva, 2011).

training for school staff and students, and improving school infrastructures to ensure girls' safety.[26]

52. Health and social welfare services, particularly maternal and reproductive health centres, are key entry points that provide support and referrals to services and protection for families and individuals at risk of violence. For instance, violence against women and girls may begin or increase during pregnancy and following the birth of children. Activities such as visits by maternal and child health nurses, as well as engaging men as future fathers, can contribute to prevention or early intervention efforts. Such activities can have a positive impact on preventing violence against women and girls and other abuses, such as child abuse.[27] In addition, it is important to address violence that women and girls face within these settings, such as health facilities, often perpetrated by health officials.[27]

53. Apart from responding to violence against women and girls, if these sectors are well-resourced and strengthened, they can be more actively engaged in prevention, through sensitization about such violence and its consequences.[27]

54. The security and justice institutions, including police and military forces, are concerned primarily with violence after it has occurred, yet their responses can also influence prevention. The procedures of such institutions, as well as the attitudes and behaviours of their professionals, while enforcing legislation, have a profound impact on community perceptions about violence against women and girls and its sanctioning. Most researchers consider that capacity-building, legal, policy and procedural reforms, as well as addressing discriminatory attitudes, are crucial in order for the institutions to enforce legislation and address violence, often perpetrated by law enforcement officials.[27]

55. Following such reforms, the institutions could be more directly involved in prevention, for example, through awareness-raising of laws, community mobilization, and working with young people.

## C. Capacity development

56. It is crucial to build the institutional capacity of health and social welfare systems, justice systems, the police and the military, and educational institutions, and to improve the skills and knowledge of their professionals. Despite the fact that there is limited evaluation of their effectiveness, they are considered important, given that prevention is a relatively new area of work. The lack of trained and qualified personnel was reported as a barrier for the implementation of laws and policies addressing violence. The majority of States reported on capacity development activities of different sectors, including the justice and health sectors.

[26] UNICEF, *2004 Global: Changing Lives of Girls: Evaluation of the African Girls' Education Initiative* (New York, 2004).

[27] Lara Fergus, background paper prepared for expert group meeting on the subject "Prevention of violence against women and girls", Bangkok, 17-20 September 2012.

# VII. Safety in public spaces

57. Studies indicate that women and girls face harassment and violence in public spaces, on public transportation, on their routes to school and work, and when accessing resources, with serious impacts on their rights to education, work and participation in political life.[28] The promotion of safety in public spaces should be a component of a holistic prevention strategy of States, in collaboration with civil society organizations, the private sector and communities. In Sweden, efforts to enhance the security of women and girls in public spaces has included gender-sensitive urban design and the engagement of local authorities.

58. Cities participating in the global initiative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UNICEF and UN-Women, "Safe and Friendly Cities for All", which aims at preventing harassment and violence against women and girls in public spaces, engage in capacity-building of urban planners to design public spaces and infrastructures in a gender-sensitive manner; work with women's groups and local communities; undertake assessments and audits to identify unsafe areas; allocate resources and strengthen laws and policies. Cities in developed countries, for example, Dublin, joined the programme in 2012.

# VIII. Partnerships

59. Collaboration with the media and civil society organizations, in particular women's organizations, as well as the active engagement of different stakeholders, is crucial to prevent violence against women and girls.

## A. Media

60. The media, including social media, advertising industries and popular culture, have a particular role to play in either perpetuating or challenging social norms and behaviours that condone violence against women and girls. The use of radio and television has been effective in changing behaviours related to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, and radio and television have been increasingly used to address violence against women and girls. For example, popular television soap operas and radio programmes, combined with community mobilization strategies, have been successfully carried out in India, Nicaragua and South Africa, showing promise in changing the cultural and social norms and attitudes associated with violent behaviour against women and girls.[28]

61. On the other hand, the media and advertising industries can often portray negative gender stereotypes. Working with these sectors to prevent violence against women and girls may entail building the capacity of media and advertising professionals, developing regulatory frameworks that prohibit gender discriminatory messaging and promote gender-sensitive reporting of violence against women and girls. Italy reported on efforts, including guidelines and agreements between the Government and the advertising sector aimed at regulating the discriminatory portrayal of women in the media and in advertising. Argentina adopted a law that

[28] Anna Falú, "Women in the city: on violence and rights" (2010).

mandates the portrayal of men's and women's images in the media in a manner that promotes gender equality.

### B. Civil society organizations

62. The development and implementation of holistic and sustained prevention strategies require the engagement of entire communities, civil society organizations and a variety of stakeholders, including community and religious leaders.

63. Women's organizations were the first to draw attention to the scourge of violence against women and girls. One of the most effective mechanisms for ensuring sustainable change in the lives of women and girls lies in supporting women's organizations to build strong social movements and to advocate for prevention of, as well as responses to, such violence.[29] A recent study comprising a global comparative analysis conducted over four decades reaffirms the impact of women's organizations on lasting and effective policy development to end violence against women and girls.[30]

64. Nonetheless, those involved in promoting gender equality and women's rights can be at risk because they are challenging deeply entrenched traditions about gender roles, as highlighted by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders in his report (A/HRC/16/44), and they should be further supported and protected.

65. Other civil society organizations, including those involved in such issues as human rights, child protection and welfare, the prevention of HIV/AIDs, and sexual and reproductive health, as well as religious and community organizations, also need to be engaged in prevention strategies.

66. Religious leaders, as well as faith institutions, can play a crucial role in the prevention of violence against women and girls by interpreting religious texts and being conduits of social norms and beliefs. As such, they have a responsibility to consider how such norms and beliefs may interact with factors that contribute to, or protect from, violence. Faith institutions are also frequently involved in delivering social services and programmes and provide opportunities to integrate prevention into such work.

## IX. Early interventions

67. While it is important to adopt strategies that promote gender equality and a culture of non-violence by targeting broader parts of the population, it is also necessary to develop strategies for targeted groups, families, parents and individuals, to address individual risk factors, such as exposure to violence.

68. Evidence shows that there is a major risk factor for future perpetration or victimization when a child is exposed to violence, either by experiencing or

[29] United Kingdom Department for International Development, "A theory of change for tackling violence against women and girls", CHASE Guidance Note Series No. 1 (2012).

[30] Mala Htun and S. Laurel Weldon, "The civic origins of progressive policy change: combating violence against women in global perspective", *American Political Science Review*, vol. 106, No. 3 (August 2012).

witnessing it.[31] According to UN-Women, boys and young men who have been so exposed are up to three times more likely to perpetrate violence in their own intimate relationships than those who have not been exposed to violence.[32] In addition, studies show that parents with harsh parenting styles are at heightened risk of abusing their children, and their children are at heightened risk of becoming violent themselves in the future.[32]

69. Programmes providing safe environments for children to help them to recover from the effects of violence and to build skills in creating healthy and equal relationships can be effective in preventing future perpetration. In Sri Lanka, several activities have been undertaken to support and protect children who have experienced violence.

70. Interventions that generally promote positive and non-violent parenting also have the potential to prevent violence against children and to build skills for more respectful and equal relationships between parents and couples. In Mauritius, programmes have been implemented to focus on building parenting skills and on premarital counselling in order to promote respectful relationships; in the Republic of Korea such counselling is also provided to migrants.

71. Programmes have also addressed the corporal punishment of children by engaging communities and individuals in a dialogue on the use of power in family relationships in order to question assumptions about child beating and to provide alternatives that foster greater respect for children.[32] In Hungary, corporal punishment of children is explicitly prohibited and prevention is re-enforced with the issuance of restraining orders.

## X. Data collection and research, monitoring and evaluation

72. Data collection on violence against women and girls, through dedicated, population-based surveys, is critical to the development and implementation of sound laws, policies and prevention measures. Considerable progress has been made, although challenges remain, including lack of uniform data collection systems and reliable service-level data.

73. Given that prevention of violence against women and girls addresses a complex array of factors, it is necessary to develop prevention strategies based on what works in order to ensure their effectiveness. It is also necessary to generate further evidence on successful strategies applicable in different contexts since risk factors may vary according to setting, different groups of women and girls or forms of violence. Nevertheless many promising efforts have yet to be rigorously evaluated in order to formally substantiate their effectiveness. The lack of rigorous evaluation should not hinder the trialling of innovative programmes and the development of practice-based learning.[32]

74. One of the main challenges for monitoring and evaluating prevention interventions is that their impact on changing attitudes and behaviours, social norms

[31] 25-50% of all children report being physically abused; see World Health Organization *Preventing Child Maltreatment: A Guide to Taking Action and Generating Evidence* (Geneva, 2006).

[32] See http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/301-consequences-and-costs-.html.

and reduction in the perpetration of violence against women and girls may only emerge long after the intervention. Since not all prevention strategies have the resources to carry out longitudinal evaluations, the development of indicators to monitor progress and measure their shorter-term impact may be necessary.[33]

75. To date, most evaluations of prevention programmes and strategies have been conducted in high-income countries and may not be directly applicable to low and middle-income countries. It is therefore also important for monitoring and evaluation tools to be practical for settings low in resources.

76. In addition, most research on factors that contribute to violence or increase the risk of violence has been limited to intimate partner and sexual violence. A recent feasibility study developed for the European Commission has extended the analysis of such factors, and their interplay in perpetration, to several other forms of violence against women and children.[34] It concludes that while there are some common risk factors for all forms of violence against women and girls, especially those related to unequal power relations between men and women, there are still distinct or additional factors for certain forms of such violence. It is therefore necessary to identify contributing, risk and protective factors for other forms of violence experienced by women and girls.

77. Furthermore, most evaluations of prevention interventions are limited to measuring changes in attitudes and beliefs related to gender equality or tolerance of violence, whether at the individual, community or organizational level. Nevertheless, more research and understanding is required on how changes in attitudes and beliefs relate to changes in behaviour in relation to such violence.

78. Many prevention interventions that have been implemented and evaluated to date have been undertaken in isolation and not as a part of a holistic approach. It is necessary to develop evaluation methodologies that can deal with the complexities of multisectoral approaches, and extend evaluation and monitoring over the mid to long term.

79. There is a critical need for more research, monitoring and evaluation of programmes in relation to their short-, medium- and long-term impact since what might not work in isolation might work in the context of a holistic approach, or vice versa, or can work over different timeframes.

## XI. Coordination within the United Nations system

80. Several key initiatives among United Nations entities have ensured increased coordination and collaboration on violence against women and its prevention.

81. The Secretary-General's campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women, coordinated by UN-Women, also stresses the importance of prevention in its framework for action. The advocacy efforts of the campaign have contributed to the launch of over 100 United Nations inter-agency initiatives addressing violence against women, while the campaign's social mobilization platform, Say NO —

[33] See A/HRC/7/6; see also human rights indicators of OHCHR, available from http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Human_rights_indicators_en.pdf.

[34] Hagemann-White and others, "Factors at play in the perpetration of violence against women, violence against children and sexual orientation violence" (2010).

UNiTE to End Violence against women, has registered over 5.5 million national actions to end such violence worldwide.

82. The results and lessons learned from the joint programming initiative undertaken by the Task Force on Violence against Women, of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, carried out in 10 countries, have been finalized.[35] The Task Force has been redesignated as the Standing Committee on Violence against Women.

83. By 2012, the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women was supporting 95 projects in 85 countries and territories, including educational programmes and the engagement of men and boys in challenging gender stereotypes.

84. The United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict comprises 13 United Nations entities and its multi-donor trust fund has supported initiatives to address and prevent sexual violence in conflict. Advocacy efforts were enhanced through the "Stop Rape Now" campaign. It also works with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

## XII. Conclusions and recommendations

85. **A systematic and holistic approach is required to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls, including legislative and policy measures, protection of survivors, and data collection and research. Despite progress, the implementation of global and national legal and policy frameworks has been slow and uneven. Efforts have mainly focused on responses for survivors after violence has occurred, while more work has to be done to prevent such violence before it occurs. So far, there has been a fragmented approach to prevention, with activities primarily focusing on awareness-raising, school programmes and community mobilization.**

86. **Prevention interventions need to uphold women's and girls' human rights in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No. 19 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. Such interventions need to be comprehensive, coordinated, integrated and multisectoral and need to address the root causes of violence, including socioeconomic causes, such as poverty, gender discrimination and inequality. Political will, allocation of resources and accountability mechanisms to ensure the implementation of strategies and programmes are required.**

87. **Prevention strategies should be integrated into broader policies and programmes related to public health, including sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, education, employment, eradication of poverty, development and security. Prevention interventions should be adapted to the socioeconomic context of different countries and to different forms of violence, including**

[35] See http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2011/VAWJointProgrammingCompendium-1.pdf.

**intimate partner violence, sexual violence, harmful practices and trafficking. The needs of certain groups of women and girls, who face multiple forms of discrimination, including indigenous and migrant women, adolescent girls, those from rural areas or ethnic minorities, women with disabilities or living with HIV/AIDS, need to be taken into consideration. Prevention strategies and programmes should be based on research and evidence, while innovative and promising practices should be implemented to generate further evidence.**

88. **While prevention is the primary responsibility of States, the active engagement of all segments of society, including men and boys, women and girls, traditional and religious leaders, as well as the media, is required. Collaboration and coordination among different governmental authorities, as well as civil society organizations and the private sector, is crucial.**

89. **With regard to the following areas, the Commission on the Status of Women may wish to call on Governments and other stakeholders to:**

**Global legal and policy frameworks**

(a) **Work towards the universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and withdraw all reservations to the Convention and ratify or accede to its Optional Protocol;**

(b) **Take urgent measures to implement global norms and standards and consider the development of a global implementation plan;**

(c) **Increase accountability, including through comprehensive reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;**

(d) **Further develop the global and regional framework on prevention of violence against women and girls;**

(e) **Consider the linkages between gender equality, women's empowerment and violence against women and girls in future development frameworks;**

**National legal, policy frameworks and resources**

(f) **Review, revise, amend or abolish laws and policies that discriminate against women and girls;**

(g) **Take urgent measures to adopt and accelerate the implementation of comprehensive legal frameworks that criminalize violence against women and girls; prosecute perpetrators to end impunity; ensure protection of survivors and their access to justice; and mandate prevention measures;**

(h) **Take urgent measures to adopt and accelerate the implementation of legal, policy measures and programmes to protect the human rights of women and girls, including their sexual and reproductive rights;**

(i) **Ensure the equal rights of women and girls to education, social security, land, property, inheritance, employment, participation and decision-making in all spheres of life, including political, legal, economic and social spheres;**

(j) **Adopt and implement comprehensive national action plans and policies, with specific timelines and benchmarks, that promote gender equality and address violence against women and girls, including prevention measures;**

(k) **Allocate adequate resources and establish all appropriate mechanisms to ensure the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws and policies, as well as coordination among different multi-stakeholders;**

**Social norms**

(l) **Develop educational programmes, including sexuality education, that promote gender equality, human rights and skills-building for respectful relationships, at all levels of formal education, including non-formal educational settings, and sporting clubs and organizations; review school curricula and textbooks to promote gender equality; and promote the specialized training of teachers and the overall capacity-building of schools in order to foster a culture of gender equality, human rights and non-violence, including through the involvement of parents and communities;**

(m) **Carry out awareness-raising and social marketing campaigns that address the root causes of all forms of violence against women and girls and promote and extend zero tolerance for such violence throughout the country, in a systematic and sustained manner, targeting the general public and particular groups of women and girls, young persons, and men and boys;**

(n) **Carry out community mobilization activities to challenge gender stereotypes, beliefs, behaviours and attitudes that condone such violence and discrimination, such as early forced marriages, missing girls at birth, female genital mutilation and honour killings; raise awareness of the unacceptability of violence; and promote gender equality and respect for human rights;**

(o) **Engage men and boys in awareness-raising and adopt measures and programmes to promote equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women in child-rearing and parenting, domestic work and caregiving, in order to strengthen gender equality and challenge gender stereotypes;**

**Institutions and capacity development**

(p) **Adopt laws, policy reforms and programmes to strengthen the capacity of governmental authorities and non-governmental organizations, justice, health, social welfare and educational institutions, as well as the military and the police, in order to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, within and outside their settings, and to promote gender equality;**

(q) **Ensure that public and private workplaces are safe, encourage women's participation and leadership; and promote gender equality through collaboration with employers and workers, regulatory and oversight frameworks and reforms, codes of conduct, protocols and procedures, as well as through awareness-raising and capacity-building;**

(r) **Integrate issues of gender equality and the prevention of violence against women and girls into health and social welfare programmes, including sexual, reproductive and maternal health, HIV/AIDS programmes and**

**programmes promoting equal, respectful and non-violent intimate and family relationships;**

**Safety in public spaces**

**(s) Design urban planning and infrastructures to ensure the safety of women and girls; undertake assessments and audits to identify unsafe areas; engage local communities, men and boys; and strengthen laws and policies on harassment and violence in public spaces;**

**Partnerships**

**(t) Support, and engage in partnerships with, civil society organizations, particularly those working with women and girls, to drive prevention at the community level, and ensure coordinated action at all levels;**

**(u) Engage all segments of society in preventing violence against women and girls, including traditional and religious leaders, young men and women;**

**(v) Engage in partnerships with the media to ensure gender-sensitive training, guidelines and regulatory frameworks to promote messages of gender equality and non-violence;**

**(w) Enhance efforts to prioritize the prevention of all forms of violence in conflict-affected settings, including through the capacity-building, empowerment and meaningful participation of women in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and post-conflict decision-making;**

**Early intervention programmes**

**(x) Develop programmes combining skills-building of respectful relationships and counselling support for children and young people exposed to violence to further avoid future perpetration of violence or victimization; adopt measures and programmes to address physical violence, including corporal punishment of children; and promote positive and non-violent parenting programmes;**

**Data collection and research, monitoring and evaluation**

**(y) Ensure systematic and coordinated collection of data, at the national level, on different forms of violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, disaggregated by sex, age and disability, in order to inform sound prevention policies and measures;**

**(z) Carry out research on factors that increase risk of or protect from violence against women and girls as well as on prevention strategies in conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian settings;**

**(aa) Develop indicators to measure progress on the prevention of such violence, including short- and medium-term progress, such as changes in attitudes, norms and practices;**

**(bb) Carry out systematic evaluation and monitoring of prevention programmes with methods appropriate to the context and scale of interventions**

**and include in the evaluations measures on the cost-effectiveness of the interventions and the feasibility of scaling up efforts;**

(cc) **Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that are practical and feasible for small organizations and low-income countries;**

**Coordination within the United Nations system**

(dd) **Strengthen coordination and accountability within the United Nations system to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls.**

United Nations E/CN.6/2013/5

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 December 2012

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-seventh session**
4-15 March 2013
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

## Discussion guide for the high-level round table on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls

**Note by the Secretariat**

## I. Introduction

1. At its fiftieth session, in 2006, the Commission decided that the annual interactive high-level round table would focus on experiences, lessons learned and good practices in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme of the annual session (Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9, para. 3).

## II. Organizational matters

### A. Theme

2. The high-level round table will focus on the priority theme of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls" (Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15, para. 2 (d)).

### B. Participants

3. The high-level round table provides an opportunity for high-level representatives of Member States attending the fifty-seventh session of the Commission to engage in dialogue and share experiences and lessons learned. The representatives may include: ministers of women's affairs; heads of national mechanisms for gender equality; and senior officials from other relevant ministries, such as those of family and children's affairs, health, education, justice, community services, foreign affairs and finance, as well as national statistical offices. The round table will be open to other members of the Commission and observers.

### C. Timing

4. The high-level round table will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on Monday, 4 March 2013, from 3 to 6 p.m.

### D. Format

5. To allow for interaction among as many participants as possible, the round table will be conducted simultaneously in two parallel meetings on the same theme.

6. The Chairs of the two parallel meetings will guide the discussions with a view to promoting the interactive nature of the round table. Interventions shall not exceed three minutes. Speakers will be encouraged to ask questions and offer comments on interventions made during the dialogue. Written statements are strongly discouraged.

7. A senior official from an entity of the United Nations system and a representative of civil society will provide comments at the end of the dialogue. The Chairs will then close the meetings.

### E. Outcome

8. The outcome of the high-level round table will be presented in a summary by the Chair.

## III. Elements for discussion in the high-level round table

### A. Background

9. The issues covered in the Commission's priority theme for 2013 have, to different degrees and from particular perspectives and approaches, been part of past intergovernmental discussions and outcomes. The main policy instruments and guidance are summarized below.

10. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provides the overarching framework for addressing discrimination. The work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women provides a clear interpretation of the Convention by explicitly recognizing violence

prevent and respond to violence under various articles in the Convention (see general recommendation Nos. 12 and 19). Specific obligations are also contained in the C ıvention on the Rights of the Child, which requires States to take measures to protect girls from violence (see articles 19 and 34).

11. In the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women,[1] Governments were called upon to take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women. In the Platform for Action, Governments were specifically called upon to ratify and/or implement international human rights instruments, including the Convention, taking into account general recommendation No. 19, and to adopt and/or implement legislation for eliminating violence against women that emphasizes the prevention of violence, the prosecution of offenders, measures to ensure the protection of women subjected to violence, access to just and effective remedies and the rehabilitation of perpetrators. They were also called upon to formulate and implement policies and programmes that provide women subjected to violence with access to mechanisms of justice and to adopt all appropriate measures, especially in the field of education, to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women and to eliminate prejudices, customary practices and all other practices based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes and on stereotyped roles for men and women.

12. The Platform for Action stressed the need to formulate and implement, at all relevant levels, plans of action to eliminate violence against women and allocate adequate resources within Government budgets. It called for the provision of a range of services and responses, including well-funded shelters, medical, psychological and other counselling services and free or low-cost legal aid, and the creation of institutional mechanisms so that women and girls can report acts of violence against them in a safer and confidential environment. In the Platform for Action, Governments were called upon to ensure the accessibility of services for specific groups of women, such as migrant women and women with disabilities, and to disseminate information on the assistance available to women and families who are victims of violence.

13. In the Platform for Action, regional and international organizations, including the United Nations system, and international financial institutions and other actors, including the private sector, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors, were called upon to support Governments in responding to and preventing violence against women.

14. The General Assembly, in previous resolutions on violence against women, including the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (resolution 48/104) and on the intensification of efforts to eliminate violence against women (resolutions 61/143, 62/133, 63/155, 64/137 and 65/187), called for holistic approaches to addressing violence through comprehensive legislation, coordination mechanisms at all levels of Government, well-funded national policies and action plans, the provision of a range of multisectoral services and responses for protection and prevention, capacity-building for professionals involved in responding to and preventing violence against women and girls and data collection and research. The

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[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations

Assembly has acknowledged the universal pervasiveness and impact of violence and stressed that violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights. The Human Rights Council has also, in various resolutions (for example, resolutions 14/12, 17/11 and 20/12), recognized the universality and consequences of violence against women and called upon Governments to implement holistic and comprehensive responses to eliminating and preventing violence, while stressing the due diligence standards for such measures.

15. Various agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women addressed issues related to violence against women and girls. The Commission addressed the need for protection and support for women and girls who are subjected to violence in its agreed conclusions of 1998 on violence against women (see E/1998/27-E/CN.6/1998/12 and Corr.1) and the need for comprehensive services on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child in its agreed conclusions of 2007 (E/2007/27-E/CN.6/2007/9, para. 14.9 (c)).

## B. Discussion guide

16. During the round table, high-level representatives of Member States are expected to focus on actions taken, lessons learned, achievements and good practices, as well as gaps and challenges, with supporting data, where available, with respect to the implementation at the national level of commitments on the priority theme. The reports of the Secretary-General on multisectoral services and responses for violence against women and girls and the prevention of violence against women and girls (to be issued as E/CN.6/2013/3 and E/CN.6/2013/4, respectively) present relevant issues related to the priority theme of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The meeting participants will discuss actions undertaken and results achieved in:

(a) Addressing the root causes of violence against women and girls and attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that legitimize, exacerbate or condone such violence;

(b) Developing and expanding partnerships with civil society organizations and the private sector and engaging different segments of society in preventing violence against women and girls;

(c) Developing and expanding the full range of coordinated multisectoral services and responses to address the multidimensional impacts of violence against women and girls;

(d) Increasing access to multisectoral services and responses for all women and girls, including women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination;

(e) Establishing mechanisms to ensure the implementation of commitments and agreements at the national level, including the provision of adequate resources, and developing effective monitoring and evaluation processes for assessing the effectiveness of laws and policies.